Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

TWO TRAVERSES ACROSS UNGAVA PENINSULA, LABRADOR*

By ROBERT J. FLAHERTY

[With separate map, Pl. VII, facing p. 128.]

In a previous article on an exploration of the Belcher Islands lying off the east coast of Hudson Bay,[1] one of the expeditions conducted by the writer for Sir William Mackenzie, president of the Canadian Northern Railway, I mentioned that, upon failure to cross to the islands over the sea ice from Great Whale River post in March, 1912, our expedition resolved itself into two traverses of the Ungava Peninsula undertaken for the purpose of intercepting on or near tide water a possible northward extension of the Animikean ore-bearing rocks which Low in 1893 had discovered along the lower reaches of the Koksoak River, a hundred to a hundred and fifty miles inland from Ungava Bay.[2]

Traverse via Lake Minto and Leaf River

The point on the Ungava seaboard where I hoped to find the extension of this rock system was Leaf Gulf, which lies some hundred miles north of the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Fort Chimo. Into Leaf Gulf discharges the Leaf River, which in turn is the discharge of Lake Minto (Kasiagaluk, the "Great Seal Lake" of the Eskimos), which lies some forty miles inland from the coast of Hudson Bay about in latitude 57° N. Low, penetrating inland in 1898 from White Whale Point, 150 miles north of Great Whale River, reached the lake, which he called Lake Minto, and explored its course eastward for a distance of forty miles until the starving condition of his dogs forced him to retreat to the sea coast.[3]

I followed Low's old route, completed the traverse of Lake Minto—which I may here mention was found to have a length of approximately 115 miles and is therefore the largest known lake in eastern Canada north of the St. Lawrence watershed—and from its outlet descended the river to the sea, thus completing the most northerly traverse and the first sea-to-sea sledge exploration of the Ungava Peninsula.

---

* By Ungava Peninsula is here meant the peninsula lying between Hudson and Ungava Bays.

[1] The Belcher Islands of Hudson Bay: Their Discovery and Exploration, *Geogr. Rev.*, June, 1918, Vol. 5 pp. 433-458.

[2] See A. P. Low: Report on Explorations in the Labrador Peninsula along the East Main, Koksoak, Hamilton, Manicuagan and Portions of Other Rivers in 1892-93-94-95, Report L of *Annual Rept. Geol. Survey of Canada*, Vol. 8 for 1895, Ottawa, 1896.

[3] A. P. Low: Report on an Exploration of the East Coast of Hudson Bay from Cape Wolstenholme to the South End of James Bay, Report D of *Annual Rept. Geol. Survey of Canada*, Vol. 13 for 1900, Ottawa, 1902, p. 34.

PREVIOUS EXPLORATIONS

The route of the most northerly traverse previously made (all of them by canoe in the open season) lay to the southward through the Indian country. This route (see the general map of Ungava Peninsula on Pl. VII), starting from Richmond Gulf and following the Clearwater, the Larch, and the Koksoak Rivers, was first taken by Dr. Mendry in 1824 on his expedition to establish Fort Chimo for the Hudson's Bay Company.[4] Low made the same crossing in 1896 and mapped and geologically explored the country. Of the area to the northward of this route Low speaks as follows:

> There still remains about 120,000 square miles of the northern portion of the peninsula, between Hudson and Ungava Bays, totally unknown to anyone except the wandering bands of Eskimo who occasionally penetrate inland from the coast.[5]

FOOD SUPPLY

This area contains at no point during the winter a game supply that is dependable. We tried for fish on lake and river but were never successful, and but five caribou were seen on all the journey. The vast herds of countless thousands which once ranged throughout the interior have shifted their migrations, south and eastward, so the natives say, to the valley of the Koksoak and the area south of Ungava Bay.

The only dog food we could obtain at Great Whale River post, where we outfitted, was the corn meal and tallow ration used by the fur men, when seal meat is not to be had, for their journeys from post to post along the seaboard. This ration we had to boil with snow water in a half-barrel-size kettle at nightfall every day—a laborious operation requiring two hours, sometimes much longer when our only fuel was the trailing spruces which we burrowed for on hands and knees in the deep winter snow.

METHOD OF TRAVEL

A supplementary supply team accompanied my own thirteen-dog team as far as Lake Minto, where the best twelve dogs were culled from both teams and the auxiliary supply incorporated with my outfit. The journey of some 750 miles to our point of relief, Fort Chimo, was made in thirty-five days—a daily rate, including five full days of stoppage, of twenty miles per day. The masterly driving of my men; their remarkable knowledge of route finding, what one might call "navigation," through endless wastes of drifting snow; and, more important still, their adaptability, personal co-operation, even comradeship, despite the fact that we had no common language save one of pantomime and the few pronounceable words I could wring from my notebook vocabulary—these were the chief factors in the success of the expedition.

---

[4] Low, work cited in footnote 2, p. 15. Dr. Mendry's expedition is the basis of Ballantyne's famous boy's story, "Ungava."

[5] Work cited in footnote 2, p. 20.

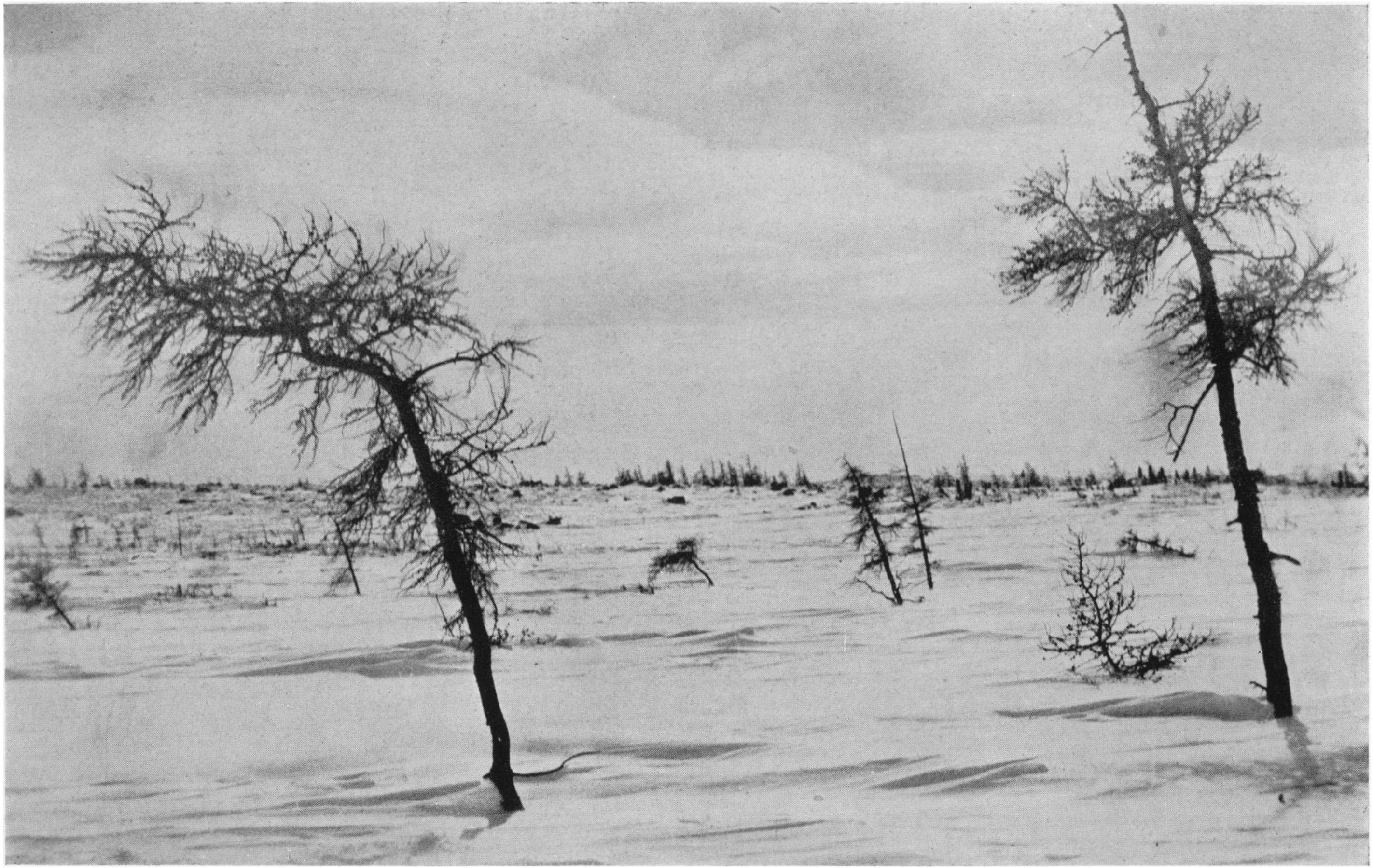


Fig. 1—The last outposts of the great northern coniferous forest: the tree limit 20 miles west of Fort Chimo.

ROUTE FROM GREAT WHALE RIVER POST TO LAKE MINTO

From Great Whale River post to White Whale Point (57° N.) we sledged along the sea ice outlying the rugged seaboard of Hudson Bay, and from this point struck inland. The coastal range of rugged, treeless granites rises to a maximum altitude of 1,000 feet, to a point some 30 miles inland, where lies the divide between Hudson and Ungava Bays. Small lakes occupy the deep, pockmark-like indentations of the hills in numbers so bewildering as to render travel most confusing. Eastward from the divide to Lake Minto the rugged granite hills gradually lower to long sloping plains, treeless save for waist-high spruces in wind-sheltered, wide-apart pockets of the valleys. Over the face of the country generally, scattered as if by a giant hand, glacial débris, erratic boulder shapes in countless multitude, add chaos to desolation.

LAKE MINTO

Of Lake Minto, Low says:[6]

> Kasiagaluk or Lake Minto is one of the largest lakes of the Labrador peninsula, being, according to the Eskimos, upwards of one hundred miles long. The portion explored consisted of two bays, each about forty miles in length, with numerous minor bays running off from both, and the main bodies being covered with large islands. The northern bay is the larger, and varies from two to ten miles in width, while the southern bay is from one to five miles wide. The main body of the lake, at the junction of these western bays, is fully fifteen miles wide, and from there to its eastern end gradually narrows so that it imperceptibly passes into the Leaf River, by which it is discharged into Ungava Bay about half way between Hopes Advance Bay and the mouth of the Koksoak River.

The lake's length, as I have mentioned, was found to be approximately 115 miles. The elevation of the surrounding country does not exceed a maximum of 400 feet, the average being 100 to 150 feet. Trees occur only at widely separated points, often from three to five miles apart, and never grow thickly enough to afford the slightest wind shelter. As the general map on Plate VII shows, the northern shore is at the tree limit. No rock formations other than gneisses and granites were noted.

At one point along the shore we camped near an old tepee frame, erected apparently many years before. The Indians, from their tree country to the south, used to make hunting excursions into this country in summer, in the olden days of the caribou migrations. Nor were their excursions altogether for caribou; they also made raids on the defenseless Eskimos,[7] who, attracted like themselves by the prospect of deer, ascended the Leaf River from Ungava Bay in kayaks.

The lake is famous among the Eskimos as the habitat of the fresh-water seal, hunted primarily not as food, but for the pelt, which, much darker, softer, and more lustrous than that of the salt-water variety, is used for their finer garments. Arctic trout, lake trout, and whitefish, common to all the larger lakes of the peninsula, are abundant.

---

[6] Work cited in footnote 3, p. 34.

[7] Defenseless in the sense that they were not armed with firearms as were the Indians. Since the time, however, that the Eskimos also have been able to secure firearms from the fur men, they have proved themselves more than a match for their hereditary foes.

Leaf River

The discharge of Lake Minto, 400 feet in width with an average depth of approximately 10 feet, is the commencement of Leaf River, one of the largest rivers of the Ungava Peninsula. For the first twenty miles it is broken by a series of small lake expansions. The country on either hand lowers to small rounded hills, with inexpressibly welcome little clumps of dwarf trees here and there in sheltering valleys. At one point these attained the proportions of a small grove large enough to afford us a break from the drift. The soughing of wind amongst them was reminiscent of real trees and timber.

From one of the lake expansions an old Eskimo migration trail leads eastward overland to the valley of the Koksoak. This trail was much used in the old days when the caribou were plentiful. Our route, on the other hand, along the Leaf to the sea was one not traveled by Eskimos in winter on account of the exceedingly rough ice where the Leaf discharges into Leaf Gulf, a fact which I did not know at the time of our journey, or we, too, should have swung off to the Koksoak, shortening our route to Fort Chimo by over 200 miles.

Where the lake expansions of the river end, flanking ranges of intensely glaciated barren granite rise to an average height of 500 feet from gravel shelves of river plain 1,000 feet in width.

Some 50 miles downstream a large tributary enters from the west, though as a matter of fact it may be the main river, for at its entry it is as large as the Leaf itself, and from its confluence the Leaf widened impressively. Strangely enough, my inquiries among the Ungava Bay natives failed to elicit any information concerning it. As the country is practically untraveled by the modern generation of Eskimos, it is to them, probably, unknown.

There is nowhere on the Leaf any direct fall, and but one long rapid, nine miles in length. The water is clear as crystal, a characteristic of all rivers of the subarctic in contrast to the "tea water" streams of the tree country to the south. Atlantic salmon, Arctic salmon, and whitefish, so say the natives, are abundant along its lower reaches, where the natives fish during the spawning season in July.

Nearing the Sea

My men were quick to note as indications of our nearness to the sea every stratified band and receded marine terrace, the first of which we came upon some 70 miles from the mouth. The terraces lay, like huge railway embankments in bas relief, plastered along the steeply sloping granite ranges to a height of 200 feet above the river. Their height

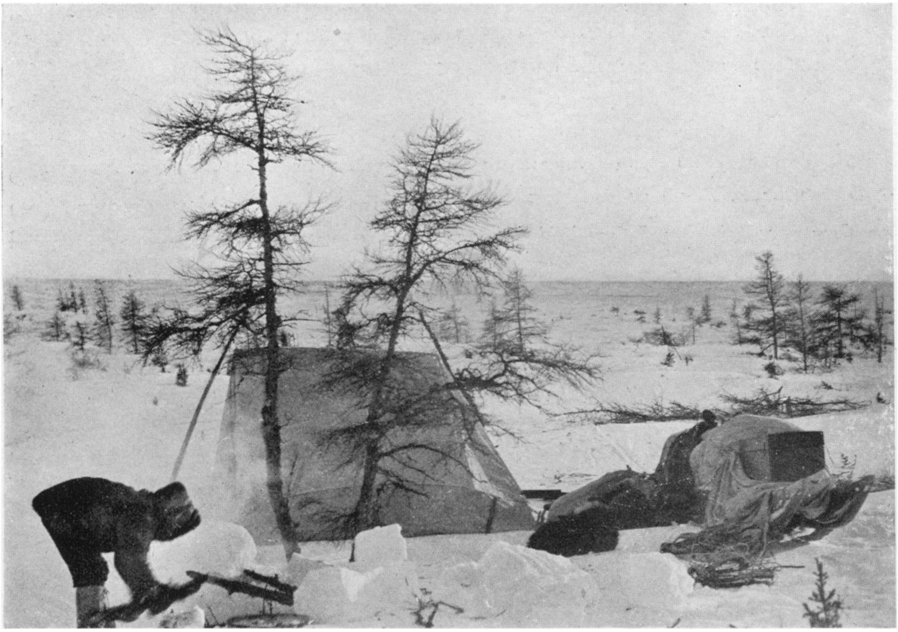


FIG. 2.

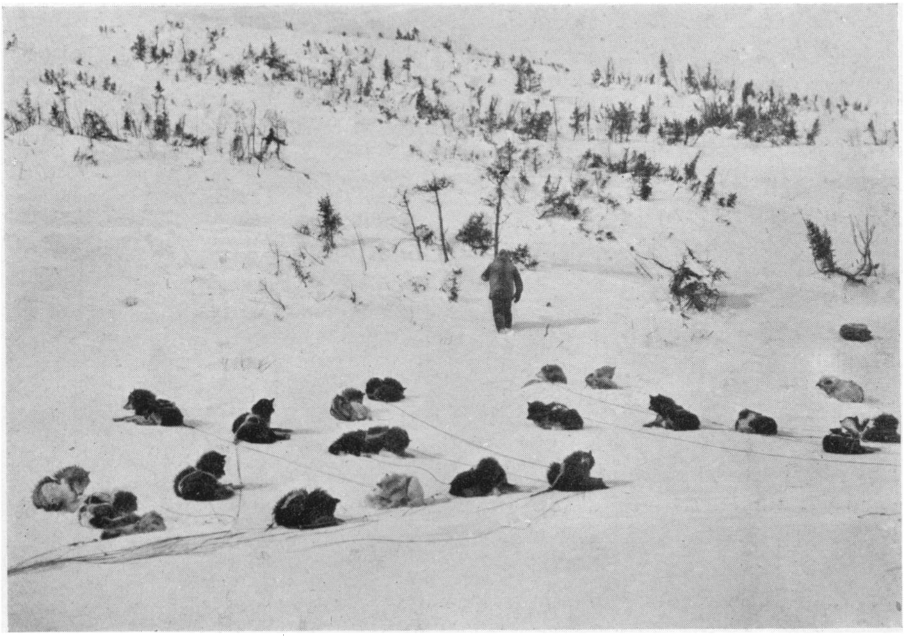


FIG. 3.

FIG. 2—A clump of dwarf trees in a wind-sheltered pocket near Lake Minto.
FIG. 3—Preparing for camp, upper Leaf River.

increased to a maximum of 250 feet as we neared the sea, an altitude which roughly corresponds to that of the terraces of Low's report along the lower Koksoak and George Rivers.[8]

The river's final 50 miles averages 1,500 feet in width. The granite ranges which form its V-shaped valley continue their average altitude of 400 to 500 feet. The trees dwarf noticeably with every mile, finally to stunted bushes waist-high and less. While we were lunching among them one day a "Whisky Johnnie" joined us at our meal—the only feathered creature other than a few ptarmigans and snow buntings that we had seen during the journey.

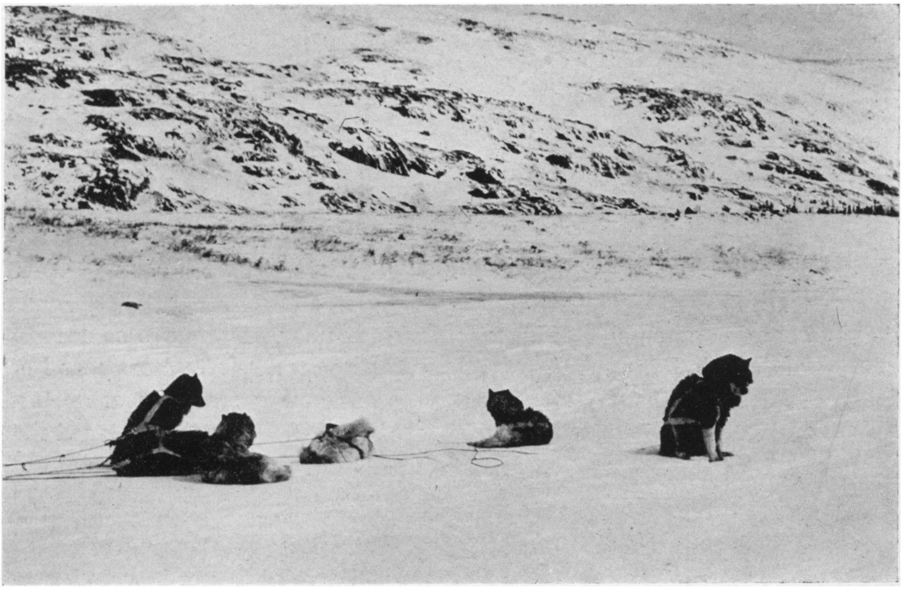


FIG. 4—On the upper Leaf on the way to Fort Chimo.

On April 3, the thermometer rose to zero at midday. The temperature up to this date had averaged —20° for eighteen days, twelve of which were thick with drifting snows and heavy winds, and two with gales. The minimum temperature experienced was —45°, and the maximum, —8°.

LEAF GULF AND FORT CHIMO

Two hundred and forty-five miles from its source, that is the outlet of Lake Minto, the Leaf River debouches over a short series of terraced rapids into a narrow half-sheer, granite-walled fiord of Leaf Gulf. The gulf itself is an unmapped, island-studded expanse some 30 miles long and 25 miles wide. Here we found, as had been hoped, a northward extension of the Animikean rocks discovered by Low along the lower reaches of the Koksoak. The topography of the intricate island groups and of the southern and eastern seaboard—gently slanting, horizontally stratified, table-topped hills—is strikingly similar to that of the Animikean area in Hudson Bay, although generally much lower, reaching a maximum altitude of 250 feet as compared with 2,000 feet in the Hudson Bay area. The rock series consequently is less graphically exposed.

---

[8] Work cited in footnote 2, p. 309.

Like Richmond Gulf with Hudson Bay, Leaf Gulf is connected by a single, gorgelike passage with Ungava Bay, through which the sixty-foot tide, one of the highest in the world, flows with such rapidity that most dangerous maelstroms occur. The natives, except at the change of tide, never venture there. A tidal indraft so tremendous makes exceedingly difficult sledge travel from the river's mouth across the gulf, where it rafts the ice to enormous heights. In fact we were a week traveling a distance of 35 miles from the river's mouth to the gulf's southeastern end. Here we gained the natives' overland route, which, starting from the gulf, continues some 80 miles southeasterly to Fort Chimo, where we arrived April 17, 1912.

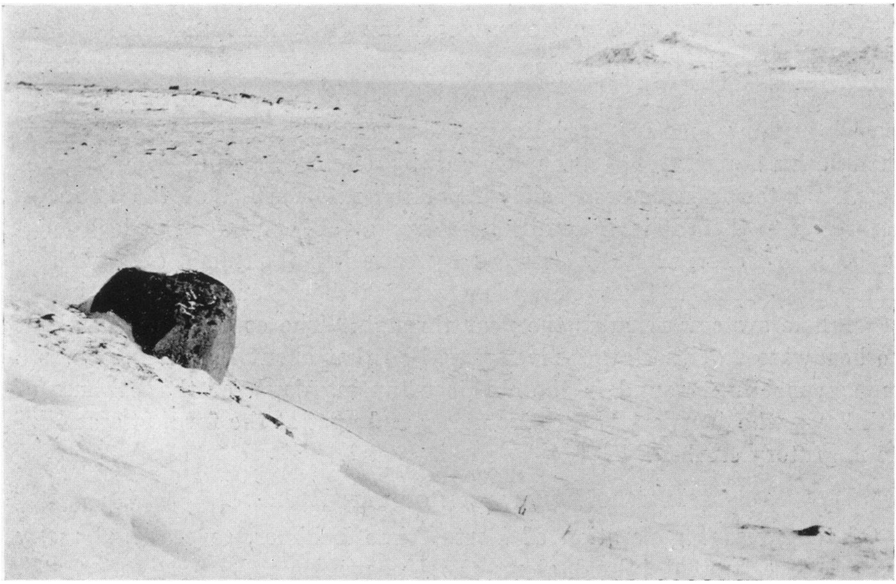


FIG. 5—Western end of Lake Minto, looking eastward.

Traverse via Payne and Povungnituk Rivers

Within a week of my arrival at Fort Chimo I returned to Leaf Gulf and made a fortnight's exploration, which, however, resulted in no mineral finds of importance. Arrived again at Fort Chimo, I awaited the break-up of the ice in the river and in Ungava Bay, when a cruise could be made northward along the coast of the bay to follow the extension of the Animikean series northward from Leaf Gulf and complete this exploration to its northernmost limit. I then planned to cross the peninsula again, westward to Hudson Bay, following approximately the 60th parallel. The traverse would be of some geographical interest as it would practically bisect the area remaining north of my sledge trip. Upon arrival on Hudson Bay I planned to continue northward to Hudson Strait at Cape Wolstenholme, where, by intercepting the Hudson's Bay Company's annual fur ship, I should be able to gain passage out to Lower Canada.

Character of the Northern Part of the Peninsula

North of the line of our sledge trip the Ungava Peninsula is wholly arctic in type, being altogether treeless and devoid of vegetation save for the flowering plants, mosses, and lichens characteristic of the arctic regions. Though its seaboard has been cruised by explorers, what is known of the vast interior is derived solely from the information of the Eskimos. According to them it is, generally speaking, a rolling plateau of low, long-sloping hills, everywhere intersected by countless thousands of lakes and connecting streams. Snow never leaves the higher ground, and ice in the larger lake systems remains the year through. The country round about the headwaters of the larger riverways, like that about Lake Minto, was a common meeting ground in the old deer-hunting days for the Eskimos of both bays, who journeyed there from east and west at the fording season of the migratory caribou.

Eskimo Knowledge of the Region

Of the present generation of Fort Chimo Eskimos, several had many years before hunted inland along the Ungava Bay slope as far as the drainage divide. With the rivers of this area therefore they were to some extent conversant, but over the divide to the region sloping towards Hudson Bay none had traveled.

Of the old travel routes for Ungava Bay hunters the principal one is by way of the Payne, the largest river to northward of the Leaf and the outlet of a large interior lake, which, according to the natives' descriptions, may be the largest body of fresh water in all Ungava and was at one time the most famous deer-hunting ground of the northern interior. Though no information was accessible as to the water route beyond the divide west of Payne Lake, the route by which the natives from Hudson Bay ascended to the lake hunting-grounds could, no doubt, be located by a reconnaissance of the lake's western end.

A New Crew and Outfit

Omarolluk and Wetunik, now that navigation had opened, were anxious to return to their families at Great Whale River. Accordingly they were outfitted with canoes and supplies and camping gear, and sent on their way via the old Mendry route to Hudson Bay. My new crew of four comprised

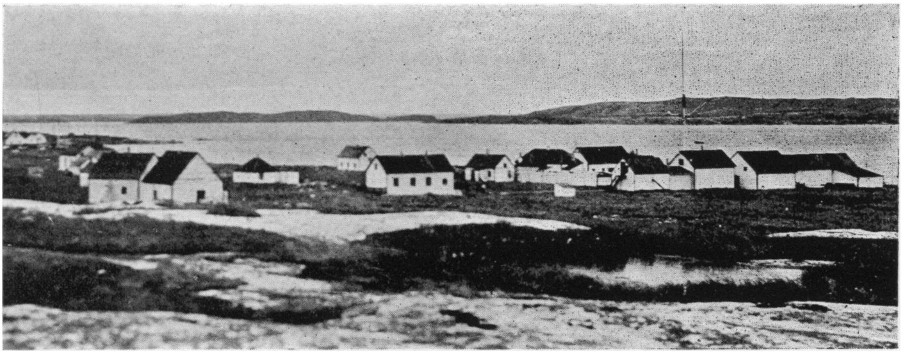


FIG. 6.

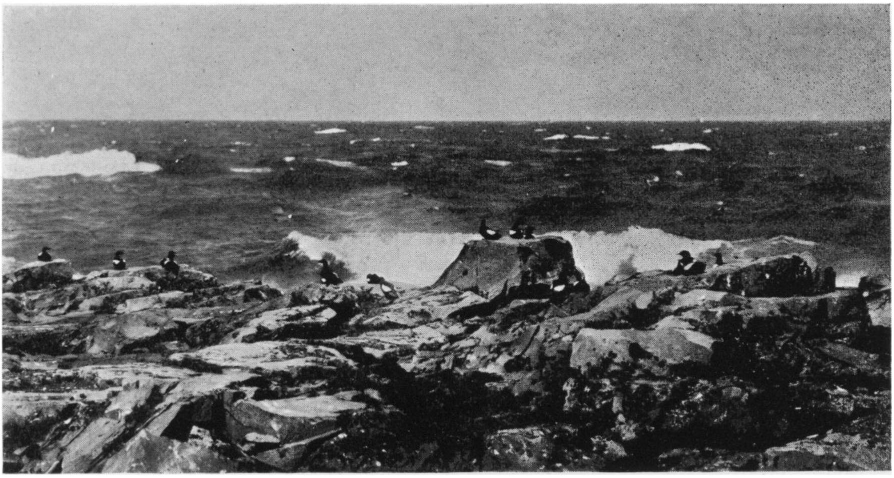


FIG. 7.

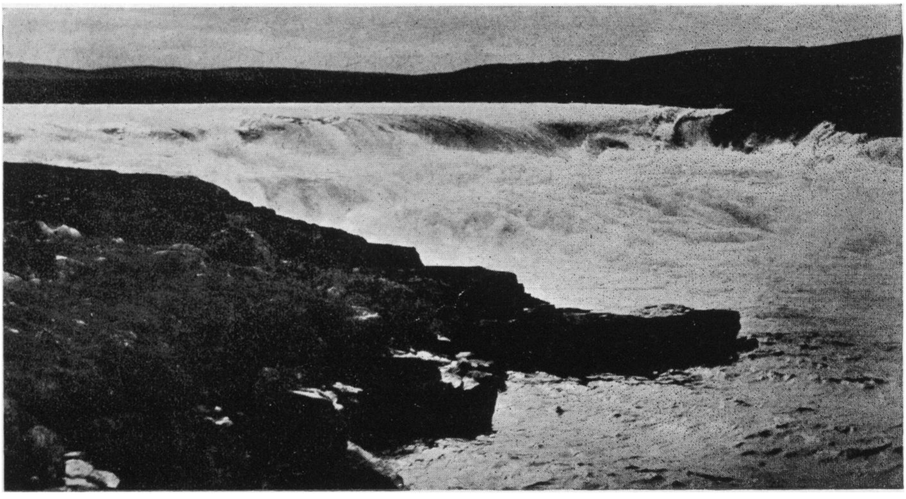


FIG. 8.

FIG. 6—Fort Chimo, showing the Koksoak River, a mile and a half broad at this point.
FIG. 7—Northeastern coast of Hudson's Bay near Cape Smith (61° N.). Sea pigeons on the rocks.
FIG. 8—A fall 35 feet high on the lower Povungnituk River.

Nuckey, an active little chap, who, owing to his sophistication in the ways of white men, was appointed head man; Nawri (the Gull), a native from Cape Hopes Advance; Awari, from Leaf Gulf; and Areghick (the Partridge), from the Koksoak.

For outfit we had two fly-proof, canvas floor tents, made by the servant women of the post and sewn with deer sinew; the usual beans, bacon, apricot, sea biscuit, and tea; adequate hunting gear—fish nets, cod lines, and snare wire, besides arms and ammunition; and a 25-foot Peterboro canoe of 4,500 pounds capacity, which, though it weighed some 200 pounds and was therefore a burdensome craft for carrying over portages, was well adapted for the final stretch of coastwise cruising.

The Ungava Coast and Payne Bay

To Payne Bay we were to travel with a crew of Eskimos in one of the Company's small coastwise craft, a 29-foot sloop, the *Walrus,* bound on a seal-hunting expedition. From the point of debarkation at the mouth of the Payne my men and I were to continue by canoe up-river and across the peninsula.

The Ungava coast northward from the mouth of the Koksoak to Payne Bay, as far as I could see while cruising its outlying waters, is formed of low-lying hills and plains. Its offshore shoals combined with the enormous tidal ebb and flow make it practically unapproachable for deep-sea ships. Where we detoured the mouth of the Leaf Gulf outlet I noted large ice floes sweeping out to sea at tugboat speed.

As regards the reconnaissance examination of the coastal rock formation I had intended to make, the cruise proved a failure, for, hardly a day beyond the mouth of the Koksoak, ice fields closed in on the coast, imprisoning us at various of the innumerable small islands which mask the actual shore line four to ten miles out to sea, while from Leaf Gulf northward coastal waters were so shallow that vast fields of ice were grounded there, preventing our approach to the mainland. Only by taking advantage of lanes as they opened under the influence of the tides were we enabled to gain small distances to northward, never more than twenty miles in a single day, often but three or four. At the end of two weeks and four days we arrived off the partly ice-free entrance to Payne Bay.

Payne Bay, the deepest indentation of Ungava Bay, is 40 miles deep with a maximum width of 14 miles. Its shore line is more rugged than that to the south, and this ruggedness increases to barren precipitous granite hills rising to an altitude of 600 feet as one travels inland to head of tide. The rock formation is nearly all granites and gneisses, save for a small area near the mouth of the bay, where occur some Animikean rocks, which, however, are of no economic interest.

As one nears the estuary of the Payne the hills fall half sheer and without shore-line benches into the sea. These granite walls, intensely glaciated, are cross-grained by enormous bands of eruptive dikes, that from the distance appear like gigantic jet ribbons laid over the hills. Along the plateau slopes winter snow lies patched over half the area, and this combined with an almost complete absence of so inconspicuous vegetation as moss lends the region a particularly desolate aspect.

Up the Payne River

The Payne at its mouth, according to Low who explored the coast line, is larger in volume than the Gatineau of the Ottawa River system of Lower Canada.[9] A half mile in width, it debouches from a canyon and, like a skein of white, threads through groups of boulder bars and islands. Granite ranges rising almost precipitously to a height varying from 300 to 600 feet bound the river's course continuously for twenty miles. Marine terraces were noted almost everywhere, plastered to the slopes to a maximum height of 300 feet. The rugged grandeur of the ranges, the bright green shrubbery edging the snow patches here and there, the white-veiled torrents that plunged sparkling in the sunshine to the river, the banks of flowers, solid masses of color, purple and white, with hovering bumblebees and butterflies—were enchanting pictures.

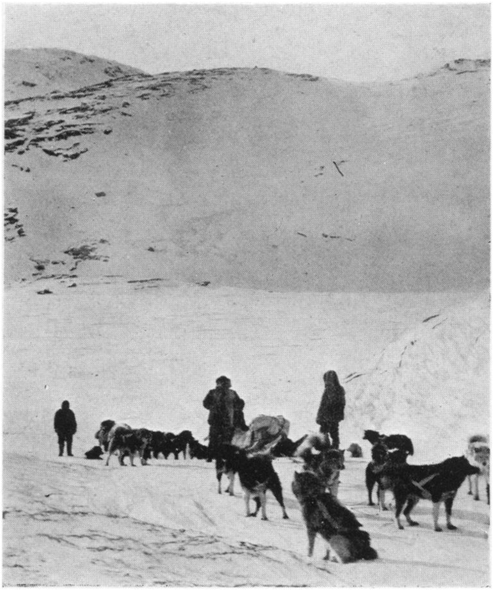


FIG. 9—The divide between Hudson and Ungava Bays near the western end of Lake Minto.

The Natives

What was to prove our only meeting with natives through all the interior occurred thirty miles inland, when, as we were sailing before a light draft of wind, Nawri suddenly called "Innuet" and pointed ahead to a kayak quickly scooting out from the shore to an island rock. As we drew nearer we saw the kayaker peering at us from behind a screen of boulders on the island's crest. At shouting range Nawri called "Chimo." He stood up then and in a queer tremulous voice answered. It was plain he knew not what to make of us; but soon, reassured, he paddled alongside and became quite happy when the men explained our presence. As we neared his encampment he called out to his huddled family, jokingly, something about the Adelite (Indian) coming. Even to this day the Indian is dreaded. This native, whose name was Gwack, together with his family, a grown-up son, two wives, a grandmother, some half dozen small children, an army of dogs, and a tame sea gull tied by a thong, was living on the Arctic salmon resources of the river near by. A plentiful supply, cleaned and split, was spread about on the ground curing in the sun.

---

[9] A. P. Low: Report on an Exploration of Part of the South Shore of Hudson Strait and of Ungava Bay, Report L of *Annual Rept. Geol. Survey of Canada*, Vol. 11 for 1898, Ottawa, 1901; reference on p. 23.

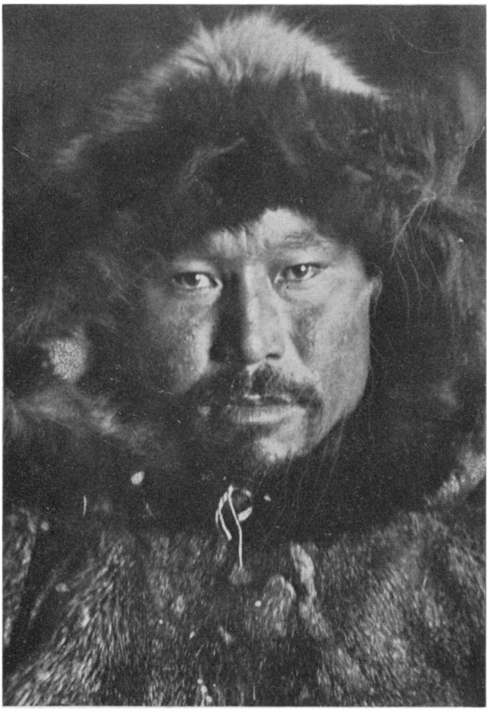


Fig. 10—Omarolluk, the head driver on the sledge expedition.

The one dependable source of food supply for the natives who travel the interior in summer is fish, particularly the *namaycush,* the great lake trout, and a finer eating fish does not exist. We caught them up to four feet in length with cod hooks, baited with pork and red flannel, so easily that we had no occasion to use our nets during the entire journey.

Nawri mentioned that Gwack was a Great Whale River Eskimo and that he had through the preceding months of winter hunted his way to the Payne with dogs and sledge through the waterways of the interior. From Great Whale River to this point seemed to me a hazardous journey, as he would have to take circuitous courses and fish through the ice for food. Far journeys have been made by criminal Eskimos, fleeing from the vengeance of their fellows, and Gwack's presence here, a hundred miles beyond the habitation of his people, seemed strongly indicative of something irregular. Nor did he look at all incapable of it. He was bald to the ears—the only bald native I have ever seen—which, combined with his sinister, weather-scarred mask, made him not a prepossessing object, to say the least.

Up a Tributary of the Payne

Some ten miles onward from Gwack's encampment we came to a large tributary of the river. Descending from the southwest lay the main river's course, which within two days, my men said, would bring us to the outlet of Payne Lake. Across this lake, the reader will remember, it was our

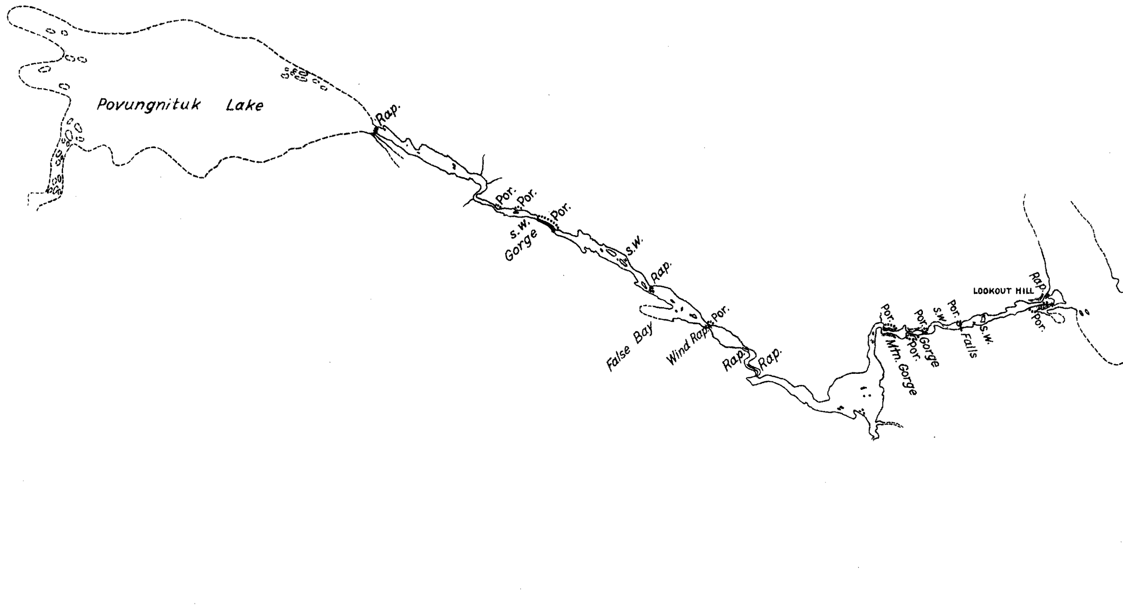
The American Geographical Society of New York

TWO ROUTE SURV
ACROSS
UNGAVA PENINS
LABRADOR
By Robert J. Flaherty

Scale 8 miles to 1 inch (1:506 880

5 0 5 10 15

The surveys were made by magnetic compass, the various features being sk
abreast of them. Distances were estimated. Previous experience had shown the
of this method, and the northern of the present traverses—the only one the pos
sufficiently known—on the assumed scale agreed within 1⅓ per cent of its true len
Names reflecting incidents of the trip were intended for personal identification
Rap., Rapids; S. W., Swift water; Por., Portages.



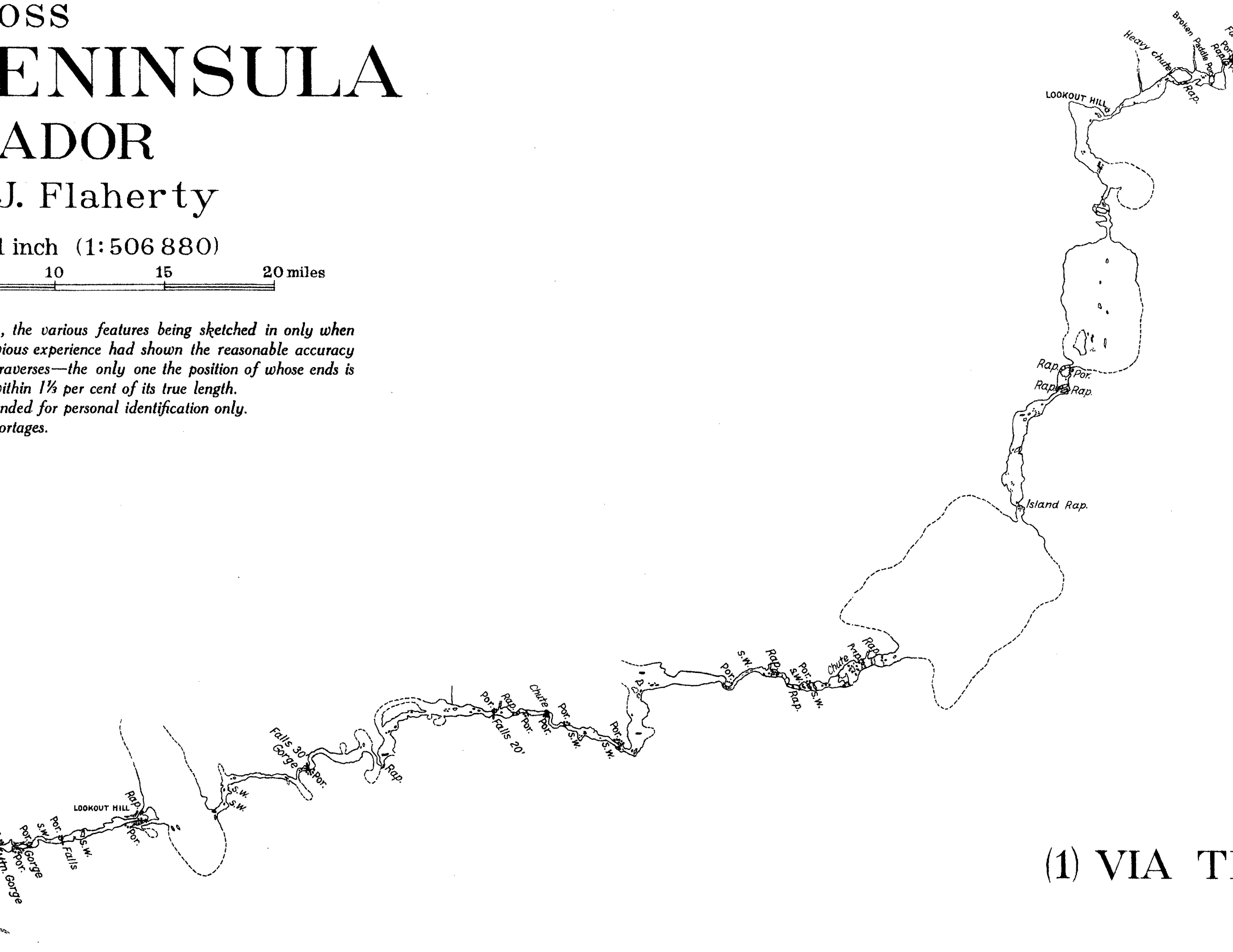
E SURVEYS
OSS
ENINSULA
ADOR

J. Flaherty

l inch (1:506 880)

10 15 20 miles

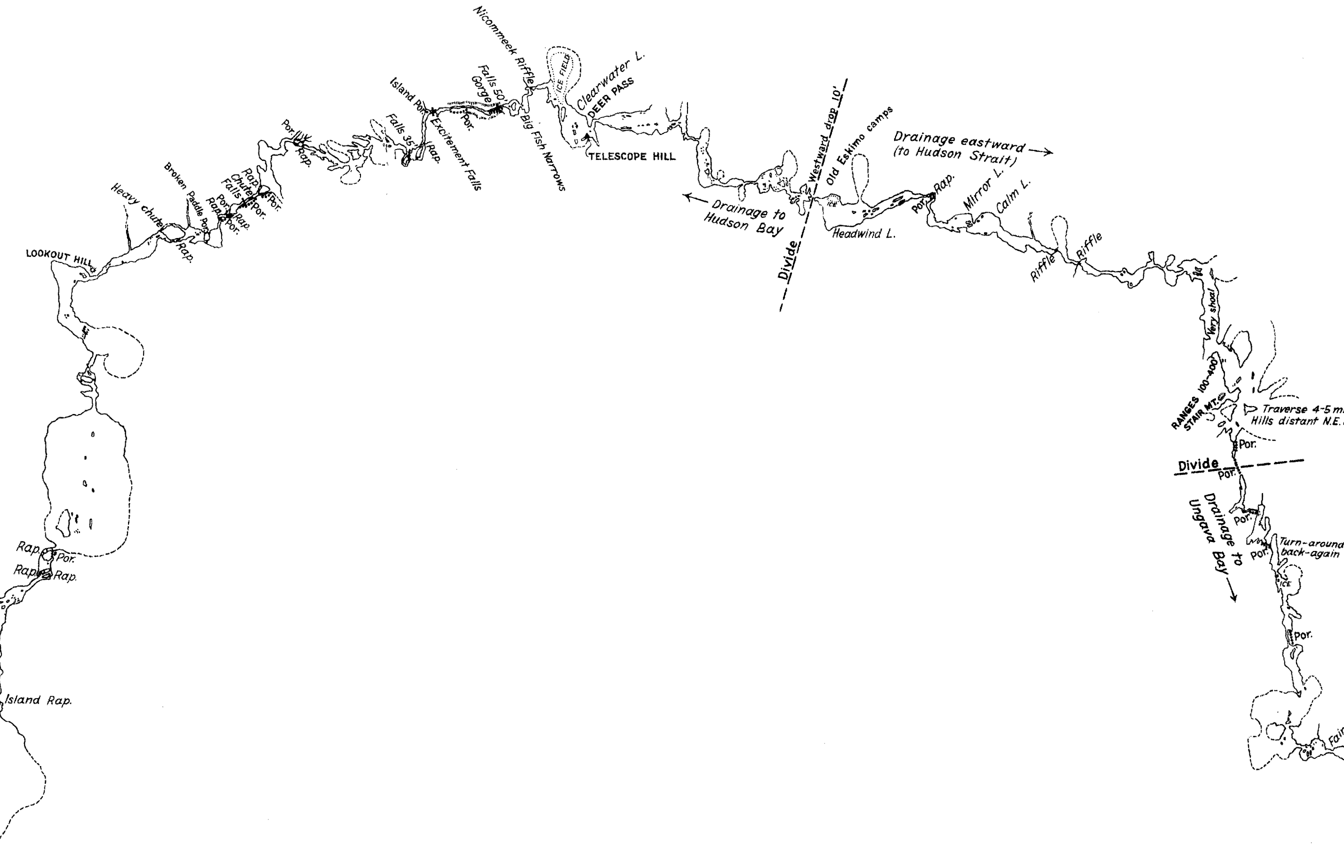
, the various features being sketched in only when
pious experience had shown the reasonable accuracy
raverses—the only one the position of whose ends is
pithin 1⅓ per cent of its true length.
nded for personal identification only.
ortages.



(1) VIA T

(2) VIA LAKE MINTO AND

Eastward, by dog sledge, March-

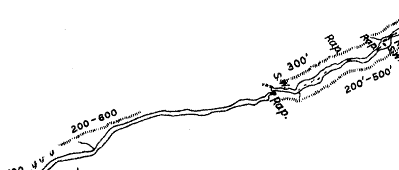


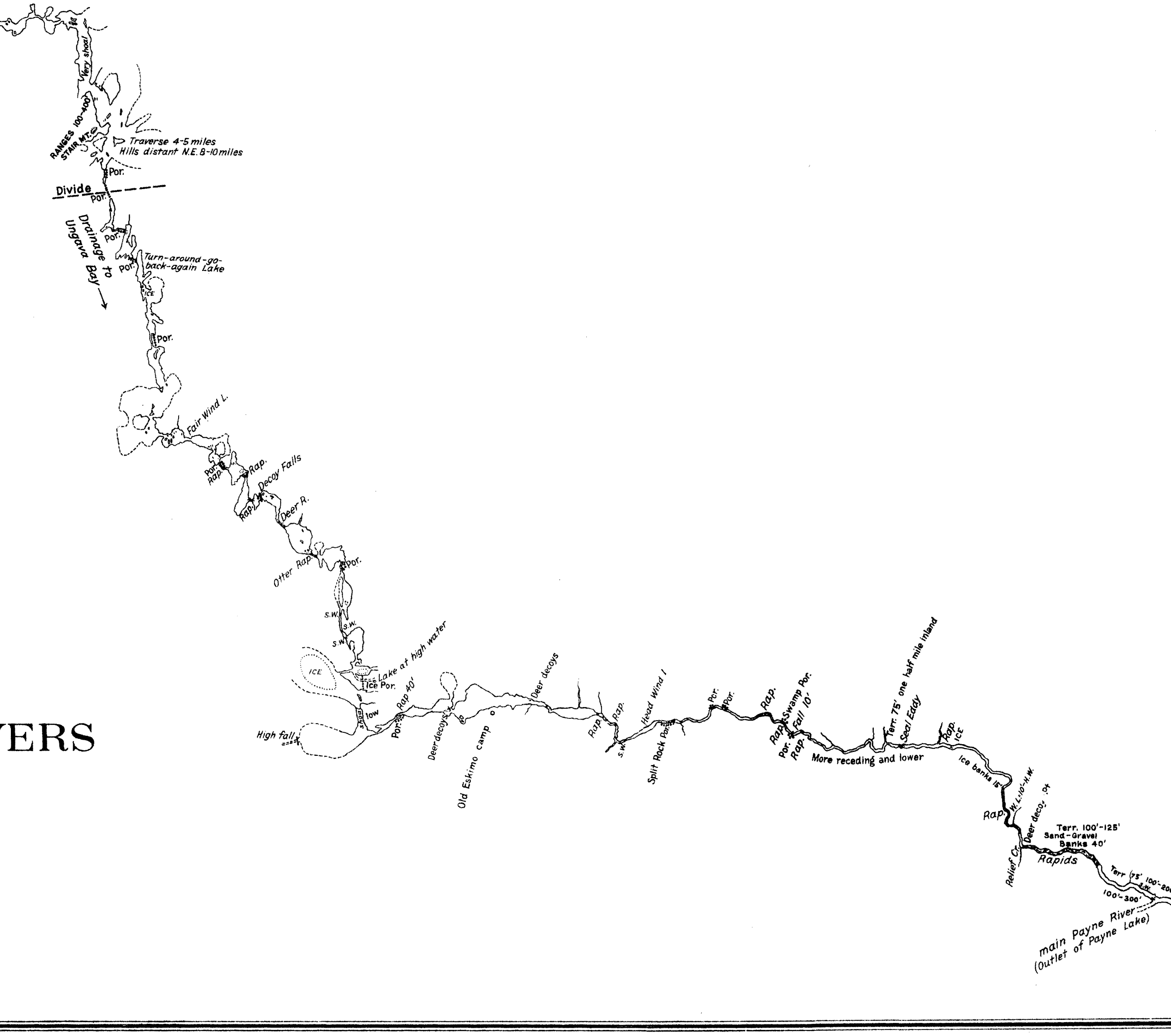
(1) VIA THE POVUNGNITUK AND PAYNE RIVERS

Westward, by canoe, June-July, 1912

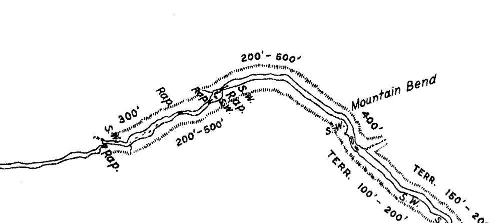
TO AND LEAF RIVER

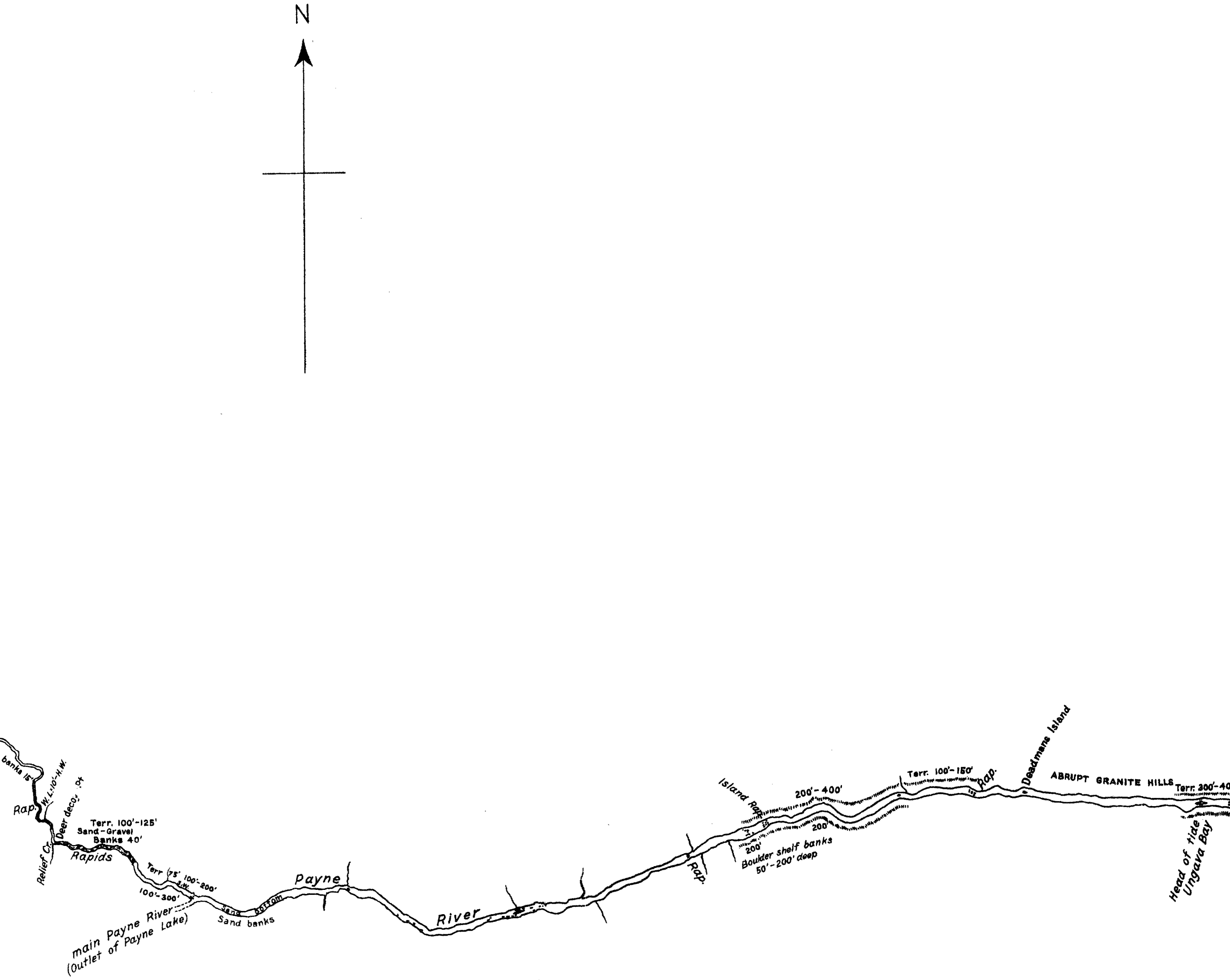
sledge, March-April, 1912

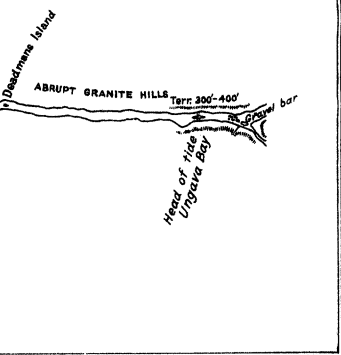



Very shoal
RANGES 100-400'
STAIR MT.
Traverse 4-5 miles
Hills distant N.E. 8-10 miles
Por.
Divide
Por.
Drainage to Ungava Bay
Por.
Por.
Turn-around-go-back-again Lake
ICE
Por.
Fair Wind L.
Por.
Rap.
Rap.
Decoy Falls
Rap.
Deer R.
Otter Rap.
Por.
S.W.
S.W.
S.W.
ICE
Lake at high water
Ice Por.
shoal
low
High fall
Por.
Rap 40'
Deer decoys
Old Eskimo camp
Deer decoys
Rap.
Rap.
S.W.
Head Wind !
Split Rock Por.
Por.
Por.
Rap.
Swamp Por.
Rap.
Por.
fall 10'
Rap.
More receding and lower
Terr. 75' one half mile inland
Seal Eddy
Rap.
ICE
Ice banks 15'
Rap.
W.L. 10' H.W.
Deer decoys
Relief Cr.
Terr. 100'-125'
Sand-Gravel
Banks 40'
Rapids
Terr. 75' 100'-20
S.W.
100'-300'
main Payne River
(Outlet of Payne Lake)

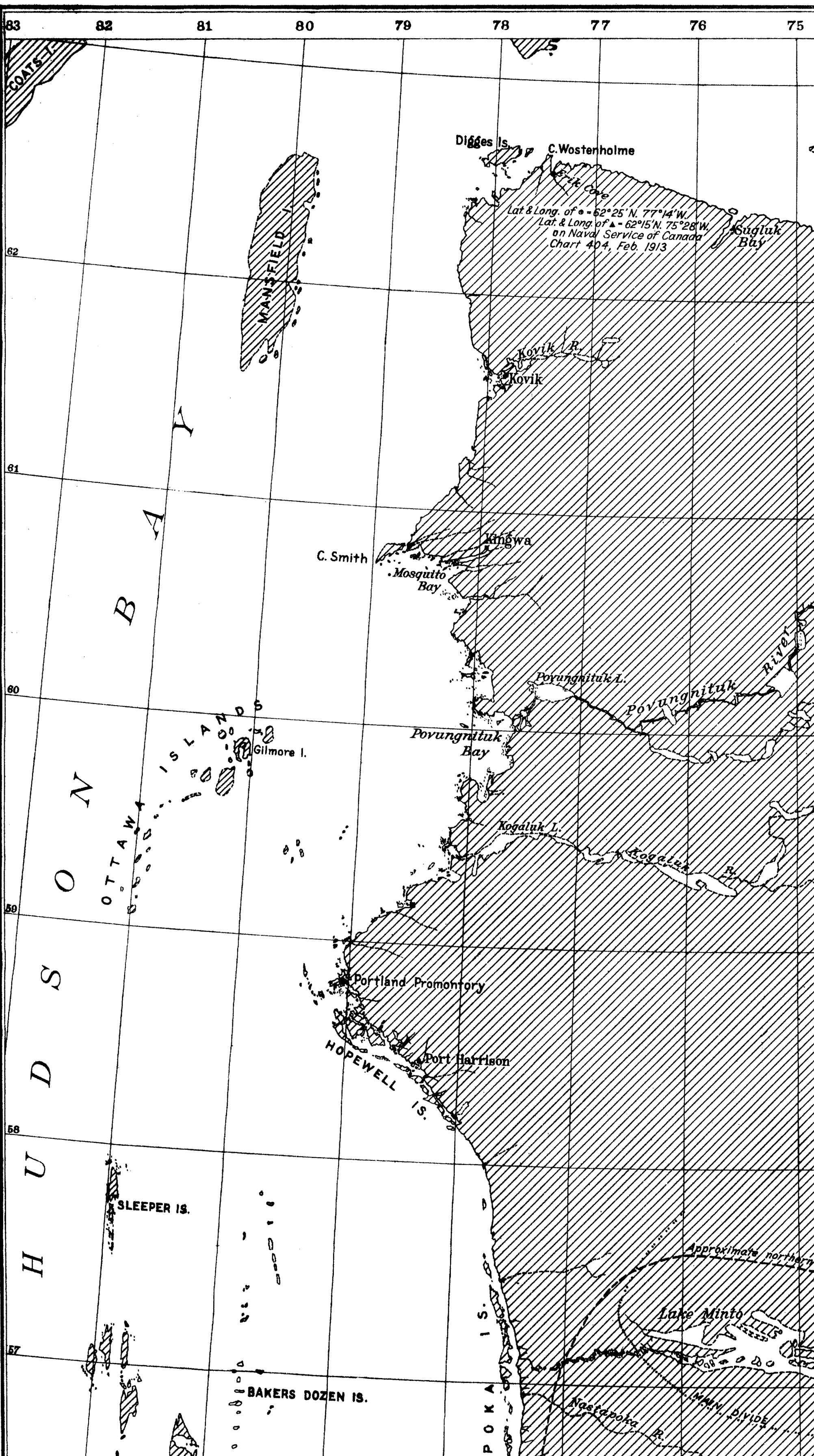
ERS


200'-500'
Rap.
S.W. 300'
Rap.
Rap.
S.W.
Rap.
Mountain Bend
400'
200'-500'
S.W.
Rap.
S.W.
TERR. 100'-200'
TERR. 150'-20
S.W.

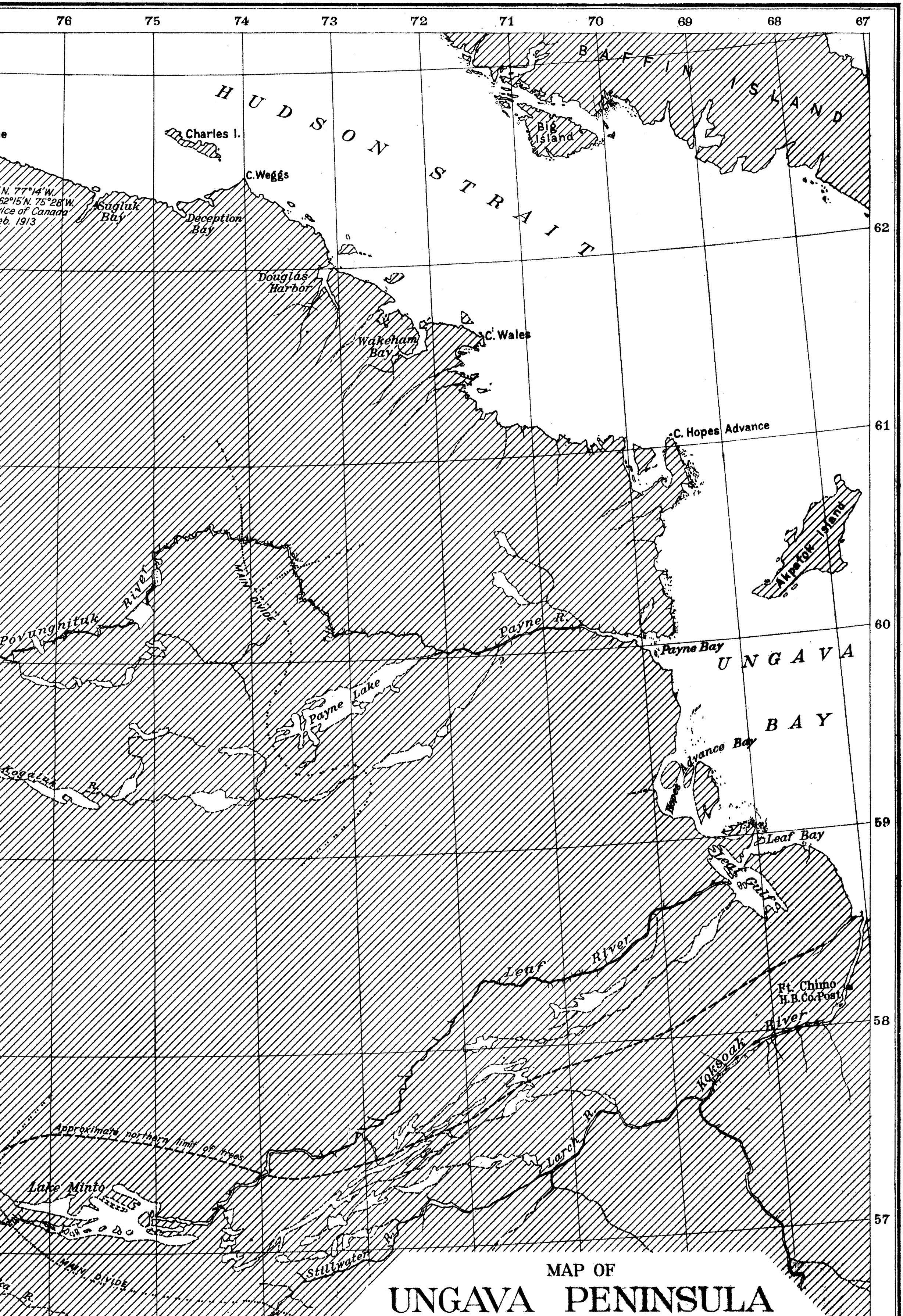

N
banks 15'
Rap.
W.L.10'-H.W.
Deer decoy, Ot
Relief Cr.
Terr. 100'-125'
Sand-Gravel
Banks 40'
Rapids
Terr 75' 100'-200'
S.W.
100'-300'
main Payne River
(Outlet of Payne Lake)
Sand bottom
Sand banks
Payne
River
Rap.
Island Rap.
200'-400'
200'
200'
Boulder shelf banks
50'-200' deep
Terr. 100'-150'
Rap.
Deadmans Island
ABRUPT GRANITE HILLS
Terr. 300'-40
Head of tide
Ungava Bay



Deadmans Island
ABRUPT GRANITE HILLS
Terr. 300'-400'
Gravel bar
Head of tide Ungava Bay



83
82
81
80
79
78
77
76
75
62
61
60
59
58
57
COATS I.
Digges Is.
C. Wostenholme
Erik Cove
Lat. & Long. of ● = 62°25'N. 77°14'W.
Lat. & Long. of ▲ = 62°15'N. 75°28'W.
on Naval Service of Canada Chart 404, Feb. 1913
Sugluk Bay
MANSFIELD I.
Kovik R.
Kovik
HUDSON BAY
C. Smith
Kingwa
Mosquito Bay
Povungnituk L.
Povungnituk River
Povungnituk Bay
OTTAWA ISLANDS
Gilmore I.
Kogaluk L.
Kogaluk R.
Portland Promontory
HOPEWELL IS.
Port Harrison
SLEEPER IS.
Approximate northern
Lake Minto
BAKERS DOZEN IS.
NASTAPOKA IS.
Nastapoka R.
MAIN DIVIDE



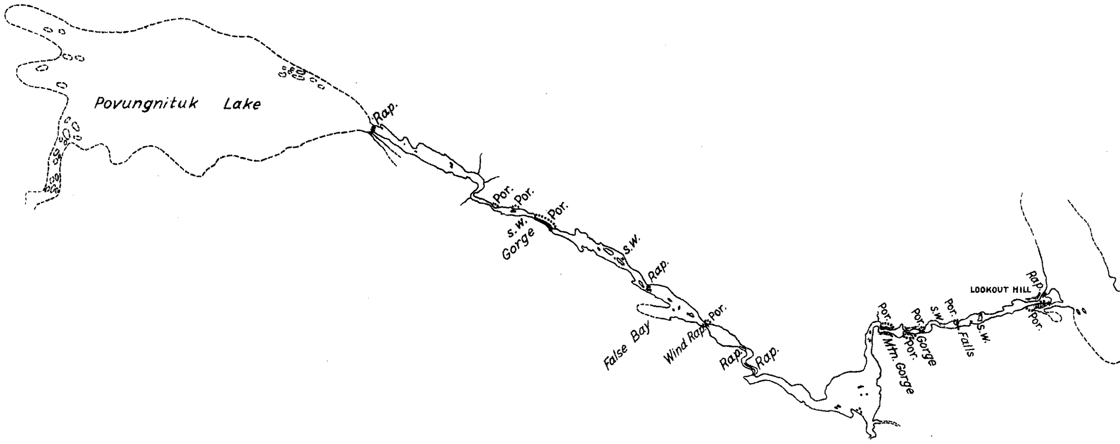
MAP OF

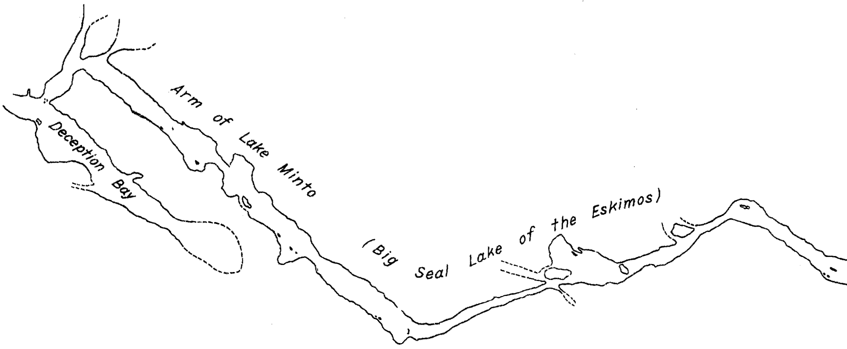
UNGAVA PENINSULA

By Robert J. Flaherty

Scale 8 miles to 1 inch (1:506 880

The surveys were made by magnetic compass, the various features being sk
abreast of them. Distances were estimated. Previous experience had shown the
of this method, and the northern of the present traverses—the only one the pos
sufficiently known—on the assumed scale agreed within 1⅓ per cent of its true len
Names reflecting incidents of the trip were intended for personal identification
Rap., Rapids; S.W., Swift water; Por., Portages.





Drawn by Wm. Briesemeister

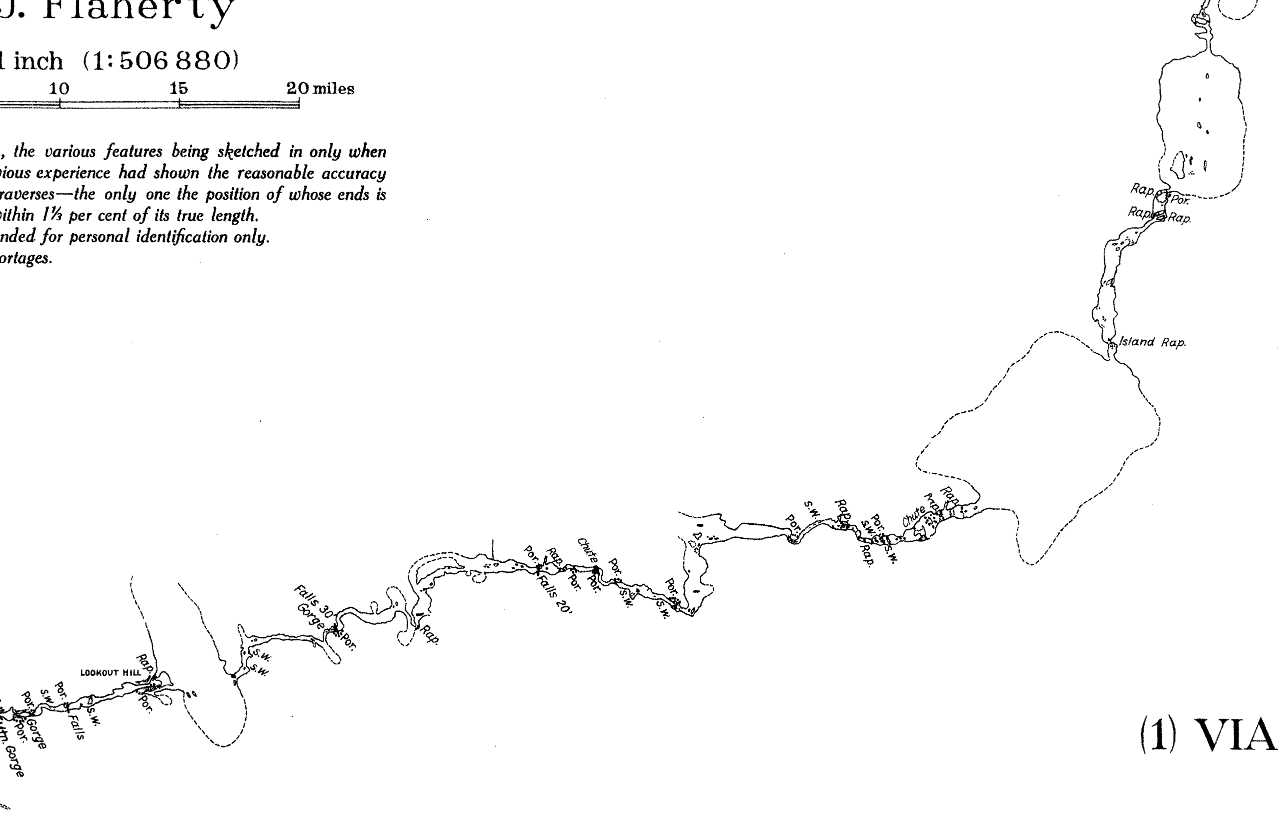
Copyright, 1918, by the American Geographical Society of New York

J. Flaherty

1 inch (1:506 880)

10 15 20 miles

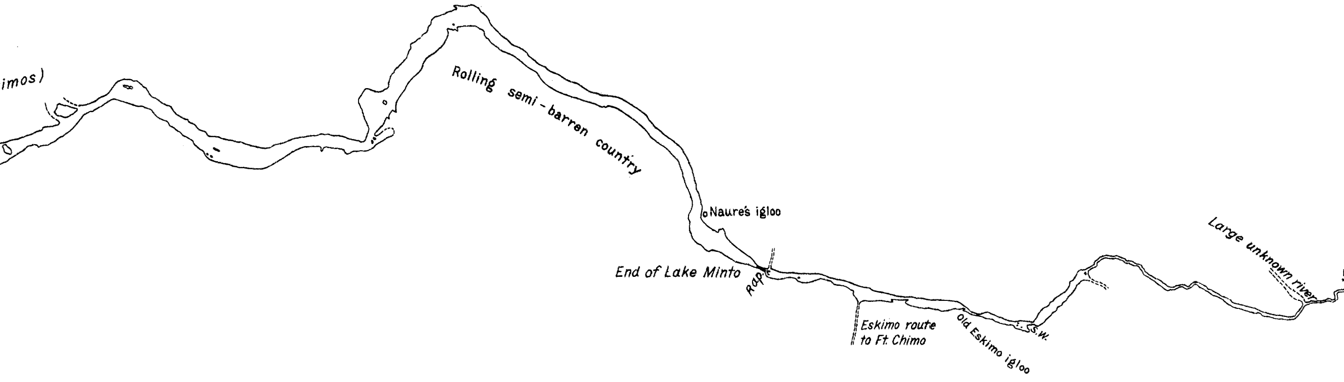
, the various features being sketched in only when
ious experience had shown the reasonable accuracy
raverses—the only one the position of whose ends is
ithin 1⅓ per cent of its true length.
nded for personal identification only.
ortages.

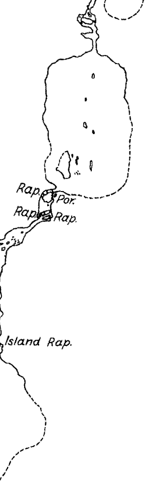


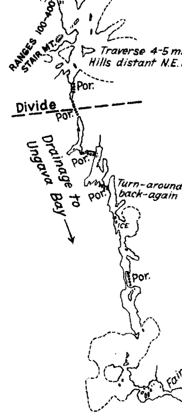
(1) VIA T

(2) VIA LAKE MINTO AND

Eastward, by dog sledge, March-





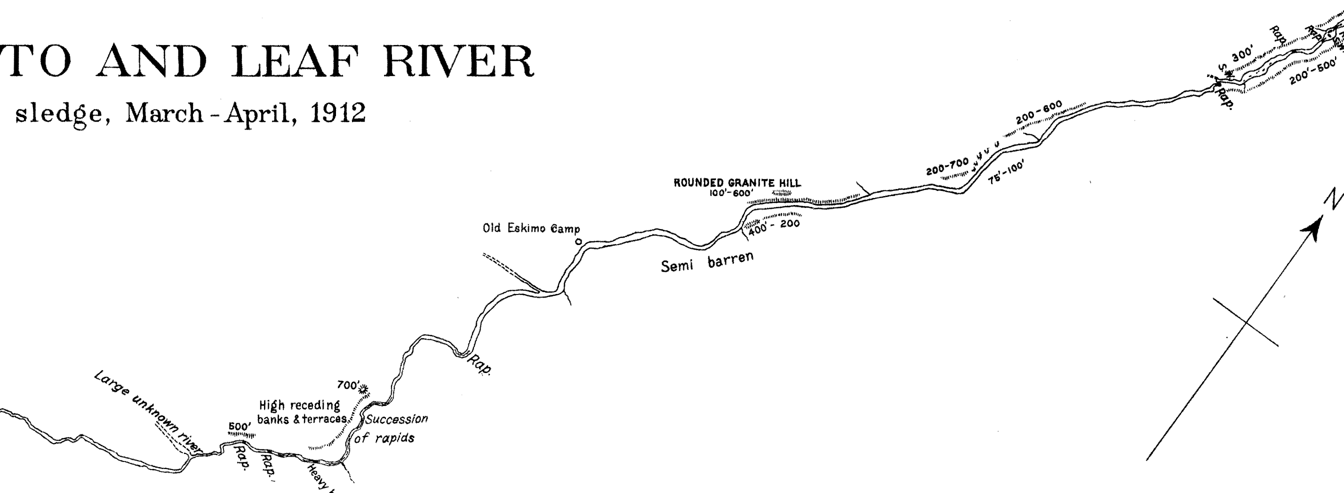


(1) VIA THE POVUNGNITUK AND PAYNE RIVERS

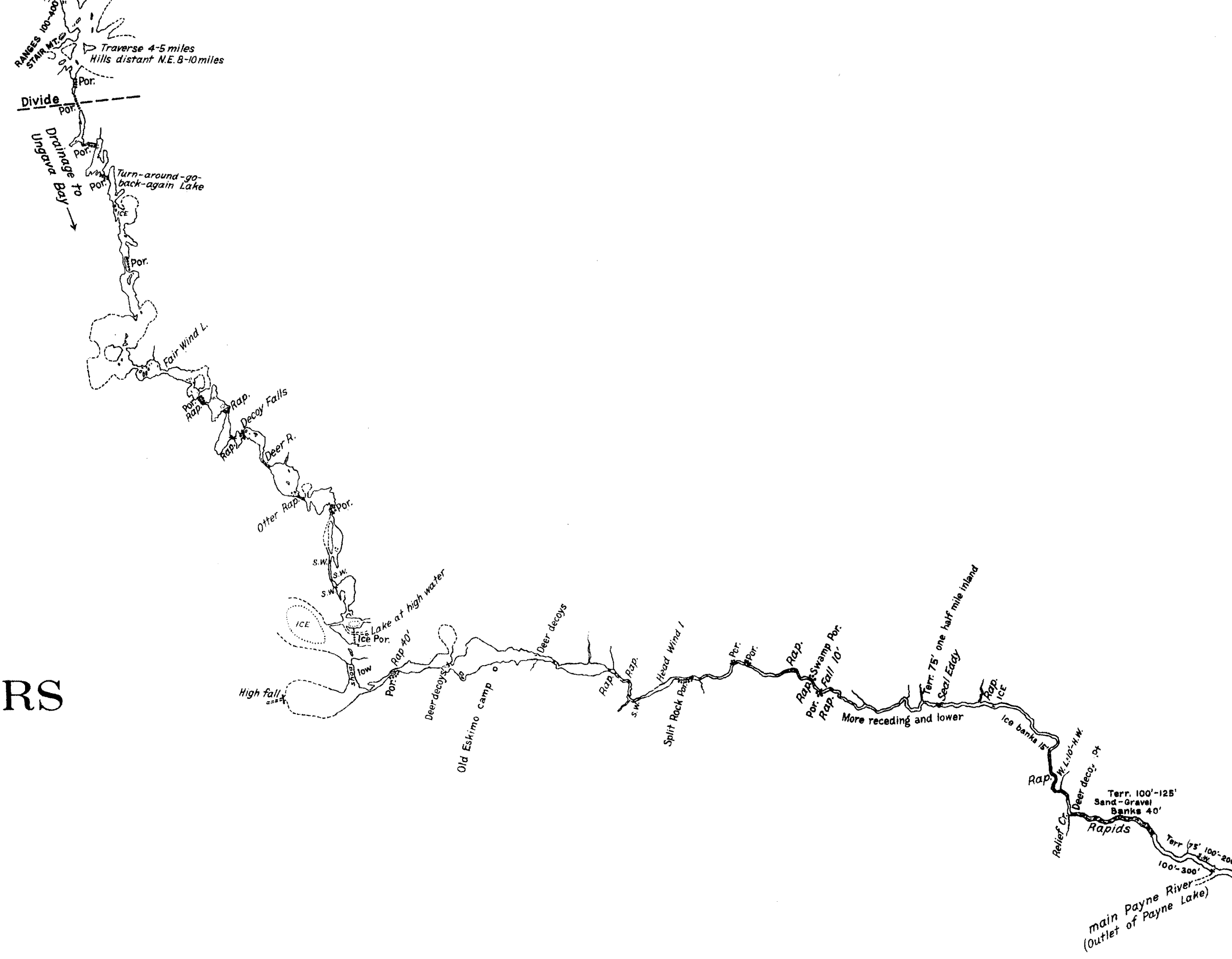
Westward, by canoe, June-July, 1912

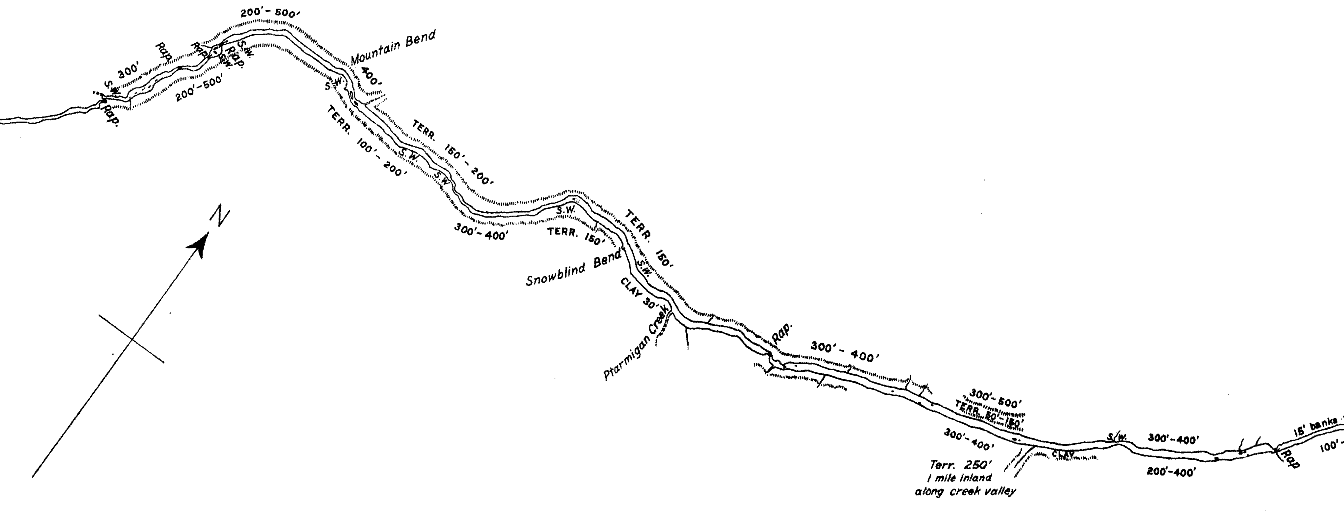
TO AND LEAF RIVER

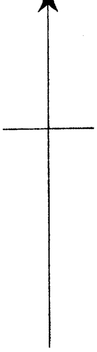
sledge, March-April, 1912

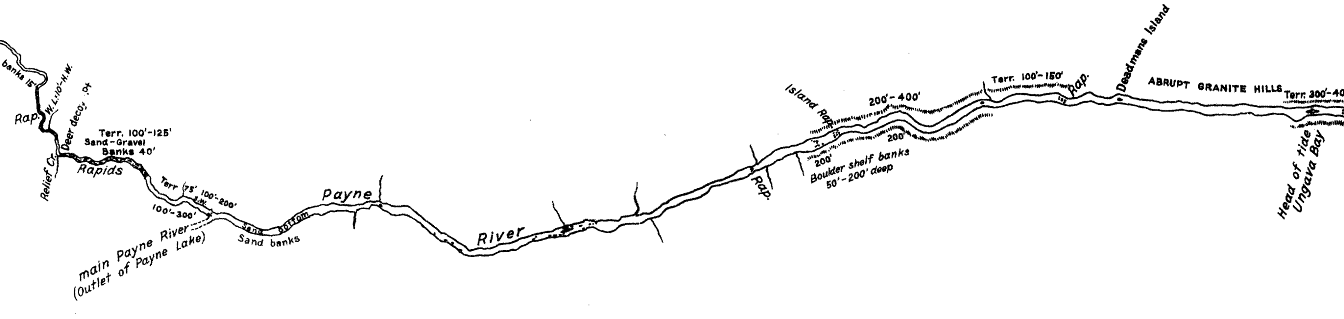


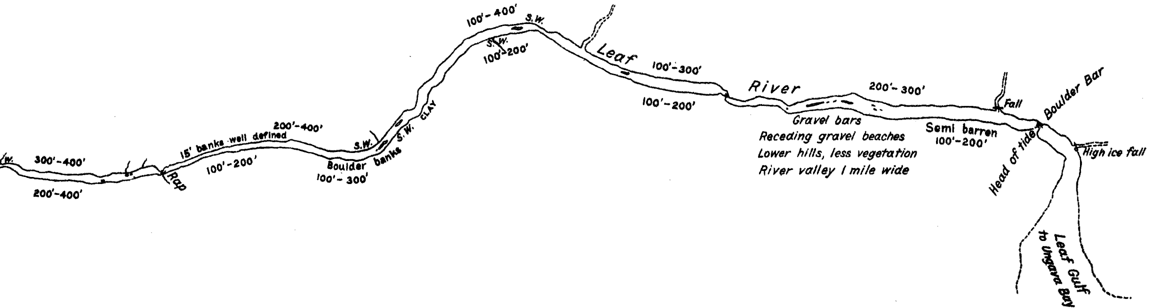
ERS

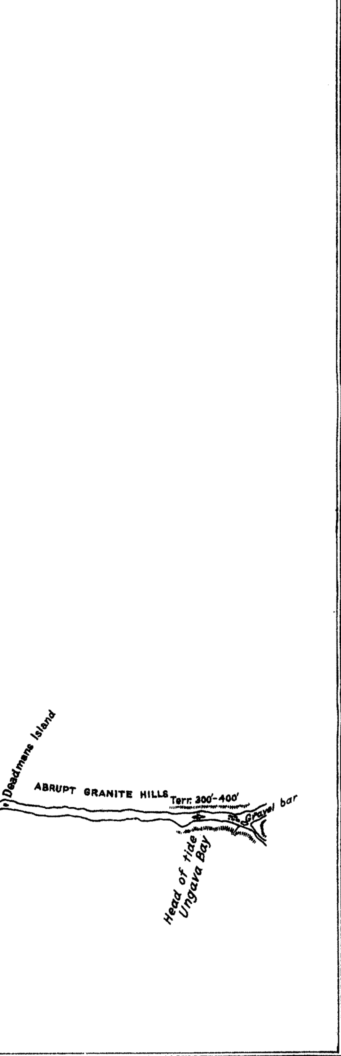

RANGES 100-400'
STAIR MT.
Traverse 4-5 miles
Hills distant N.E. 8-10 miles
Por.
Divide
Por.
Drainage to Ungava Bay
Por.
Por.
Turn-around-go-back-again Lake
ICE
Por.
Fair Wind L.
Por.
Rap.
Rap.
Decoy Falls
Rap.
Deer R.
Otter Rap.
Por.
S.W.
S.W.
S.W.
ICE
Lake at high water
Ice Por.
Shoals
low
Rap 40'
Por.
High fall
Deer decoys
Old Eskimo camp
Deer decoys
Rap.
Rap.
S.W.
Head Wind I
Split Rock Por.
Por.
Por.
Rap.
Swamp Por.
Rap.
Fall 10'
Por.
Rap.
More receding and lower
Terr. 75' one half mile inland
Seal Eddy
Rap.
ICE
Ice banks 15'
W.L.-10'-H.W.
Rap.
Deer decoys
Relief Cr.
Terr. 100'-125'
Sand-Gravel
Banks 40'
Rapids
Terr 75' 100'-200
S.W.
100'-300'
main Payne River
(Outlet of Payne Lake)

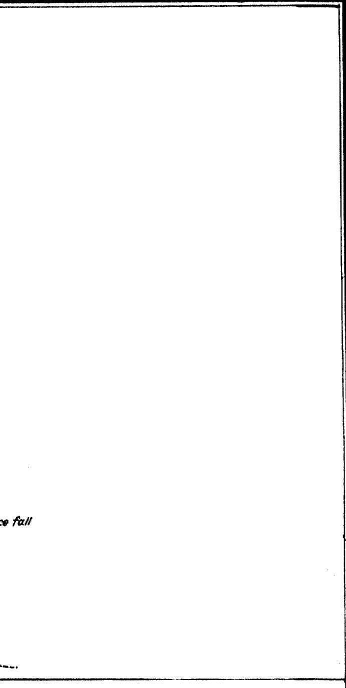

S.W. 300'
Rap.
Rap.
S.W.
Rap.
Rap.
200'-500'
200'-500'
Mountain Bend
400'
S.W.
TERR. 100'-200'
TERR. 150'-200'
S.W.
S.W.
S.W.
300'-400'
TERR. 150'
TERR. 150'
N
Snowblind Bend
S.W.
CLAY 30'
Ptarmigan Creek
Rap.
300'-400'
300'-500'
TERR. 50'-150'
300'-400'
Terr. 250'
1 mile inland
along creek valley
CLAY
S/W.
300'-400'
200'-400'
15' banks
100'-
Rap

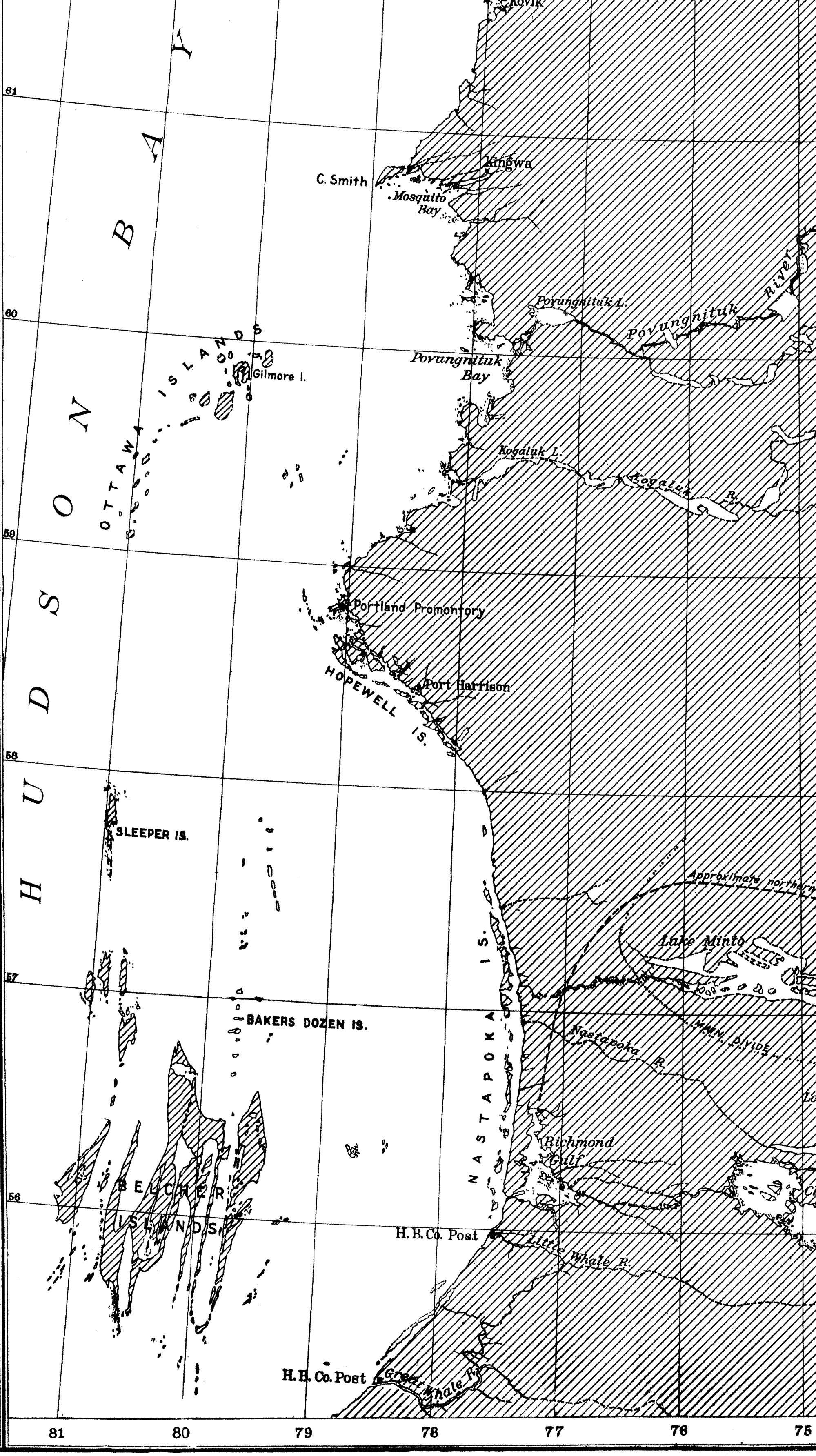


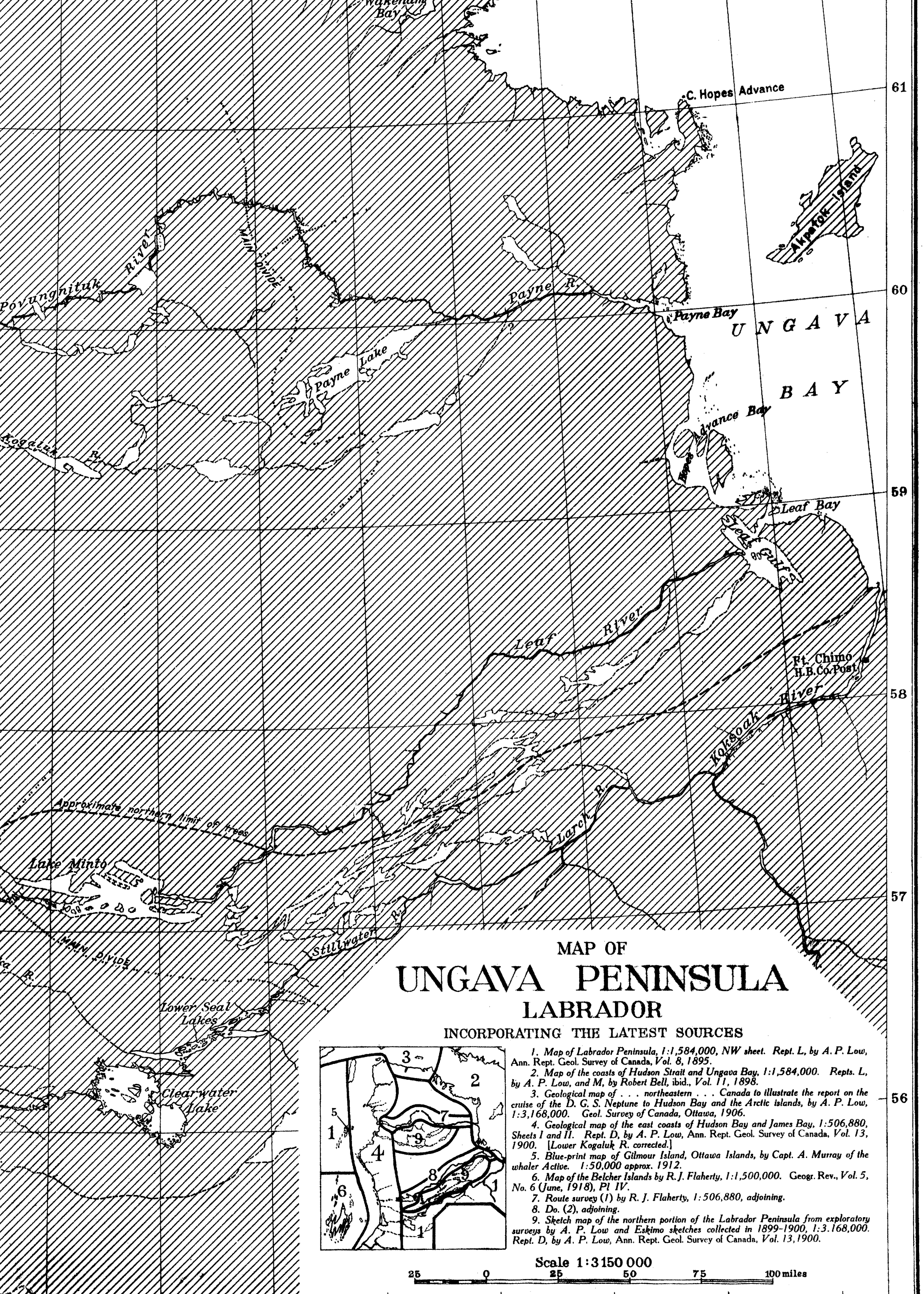

banks 15'
Rap.
W.L.-10'-H.W.
Deer decoy pt
Relief Cr.
Terr. 100'-125'
Sand-Gravel
Banks 40'
Rapids
Terr 75' 100'-200'
S.W.
100'-300'
Sand bottom
Sand banks
main Payne River
(Outlet of Payne Lake)
Payne
River
Rap.
Island Rap.
200'-400'
200'
200'
Boulder shelf banks
50'-200' deep
Terr. 100'-150'
Rap.
Deadmans Island
ABRUPT GRANITE HILLS
Terr. 300'-40
Head of tide
Ungava Bay


W.
300'-400'
200'-400'
Rap
15' banks well defined
200'-400'
100'-200'
S.W.
Boulder banks
100'-300'
S.W. CLAY
100'-400'
S.W.
S.W.
100'-200'
Leaf
100'-300'
100'-200'
River
200'-300'
Gravel bars
Receding gravel beaches
Lower hills, less vegetation
River valley 1 mile wide
Semi barren
100'-200'
Fall
Boulder Bar
Head of tide
High ice fall
Leaf Gulf
to Ungava Bay


Deadmans Island
ABRUPT GRANITE HILLS
Terr. 300'-400'
Gravel bar
Head of tide Ungava Bay


ce fall


HUDSON BAY
Kovik
Kingwa
C. Smith
Mosquito Bay
Povungnituk L.
Povungnituk River
Povungnituk Bay
OTTAWA ISLANDS
Gilmore I.
Kogaluk L.
Kogaluk R.
Portland Promontory
HOPEWELL IS.
Port Harrison
SLEEPER IS.
BAKERS DOZEN IS.
BELCHER ISLANDS
NASTAPOKA IS.
Approximate northern
Lake Minto
MAIN DIVIDE
Nastapoka R.
Lo
Richmond Gulf
Cl
H.B.Co. Post
Little Whale R.
H.B.Co. Post
Great Whale R.
61
60
59
58
57
56
81
80
79
78
77
76
75



MAP OF

UNGAVA PENINSULA

LABRADOR

INCORPORATING THE LATEST SOURCES

1. *Map of Labrador Peninsula, 1:1,584,000, NW sheet. Rept. L, by A. P. Low,* Ann. Rept. Geol. Survey of Canada, *Vol. 8, 1895.*

2. *Map of the coasts of Hudson Strait and Ungava Bay, 1:1,584,000. Repts. L, by A. P. Low, and M, by Robert Bell,* ibid., *Vol. 11, 1898.*

3. *Geological map of . . . northeastern . . . Canada to illustrate the report on the cruise of the D. G. S. Neptune to Hudson Bay and the Arctic islands, by A. P. Low, 1:3,168,000. Geol. Survey of Canada, Ottawa, 1906.*

4. *Geological map of the east coasts of Hudson Bay and James Bay, 1:506,880, Sheets I and II. Rept. D, by A. P. Low,* Ann. Rept. Geol. Survey of Canada, *Vol. 13, 1900. [Lower Kogaluk R. corrected.]*

5. *Blue-print map of Gilmour Island, Ottawa Islands, by Capt. A. Murray of the whaler Active. 1:50,000 approx. 1912.*

6. *Map of the Belcher Islands by R. J. Flaherty, 1:1,500,000.* Geogr. Rev., *Vol. 5, No. 6 (June, 1918), Pl IV.*

7. *Route survey (1) by R. J. Flaherty, 1:506,880, adjoining.*

8. *Do. (2), adjoining.*

9. *Sketch map of the northern portion of the Labrador Peninsula from exploratory surveys by A. P. Low and Eskimo sketches collected in 1899-1900, 1:3.168,000. Rept. D, by A. P. Low,* Ann. Rept. Geol. Survey of Canada, *Vol. 13, 1900.*

Scale 1:3 150 000

NATIONAL PROCESS CO., INC., N. Y. CITY.

intention to travel; but of late we had encountered much sunken ice along the river banks, strong indication that the lake was not altogether free of ice, and this raised the question as to whether our progress across it might not be altogether barred. On the other hand, the river entering from the northwest drained an area of small lakes which for the most part were shoal and on that account more likely to be free of ice obstructions, so the men explained. Tracing on the sand its approximate course, Nawri, the only man who had traveled the stream, showed us that though broken by many portages it was feasible of ascent. From the divide beyond it, Nawri said, we should find a water route to Hudson Bay which had been much used in the old deer-hunting days by the Hudson Bay natives. Accordingly we decided to abandon the Payne, though with much regret at losing an opportunity to explore what may be one of the largest lakes in all Labrador.

Not a mile beyond its beginning the new route became much broken by rapids and narrowed to what was nothing more than a V-shaped trough where ice embankments, ten to twenty feet high, stranded by the river's recession from the floods of earlier weeks, made treacherous tracking ground.

Desolate Region

The countryside became increasingly desolate, boulder-strewn everywhere and snow-patched over its greater area. We met with nesting black and red-throated loons and circling gulls along the gravel shores of every lake expansion. Loons I have never before or since encountered in such numbers; every tiny lake had its families of them; their melancholy hallooing and the forlorn creeking of gulls were the only living sounds.

Hundreds of thousands of migratory caribou must have ranged through this country in former years, judging by the number of old fording trails and deer decoys we met with. Deer decoys are groups of large erratic boulders, each boulder topped with a smaller one. Viewed from a distance they look not unlike a herd of grazing deer. The efforts of many generations alone could account for their aggregation. How complete is the absence of deer at the present time may be realized from the fact that we saw but one on the whole traverse.

Along its upper waters the tributary we followed from the Payne was a heart-breaking succession of boulder-strewn portages and confusing lake-expansions. Such intricate waterways I never before had traveled; they were merely shallows in the country's saucer-like depressions, so shallow that one could oftentimes wade them. Their shore lines were so gradually sloping, so lacking in contrast owing to the absence of all color save the wearying dominant note of leaden gray, that we sometimes imagined as we entered them that large traverses lay before us. Even at a distance of three or four miles a haze bathed the gray, barren rocks, enhancing the illusion. The larger of them all contained winter's ice; some were covered with solid sun-blackened fields, save for narrow margins along the shore line, where we traveled on sinuous courses.

The increasing shoalness of the lakes, the larger extent of gravel areas, and the comparative dearth of even moss indicated our approach to a divide, which, on July 17, having reached a point where our frothy river dwindled to an insignificant creek and was no longer navigable, we crossed and entered an area which may drain to Hudson Strait.

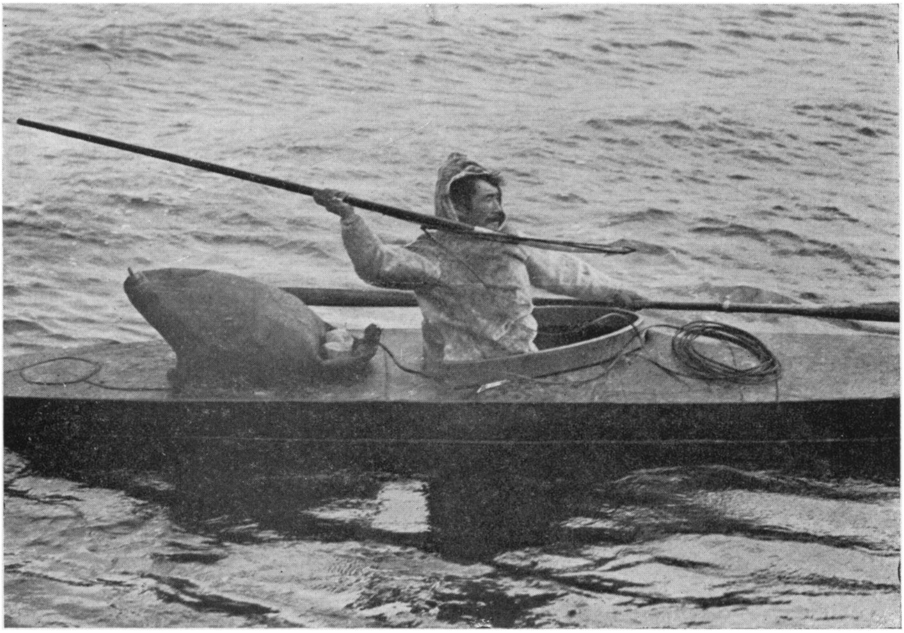


FIG. 11—Eskimo in kayak with harpoon attached by a line to an inflated sealskin to insure its recovery.

OVER THE DIVIDE TO THE POVUNGNITUK

For three days together on this divide gales with rain and snow held us storm-bound, soaked our moss fuel, and reduced our fare to sea biscuit and cold water. From the time we left the estuary of the Payne moss had constituted our sole fuel. In preparation for the cooking of our meals we gathered it in a dozen or more heaping armfuls. Rectangles of stones, two of them holding our kettles, the third our frying pan, were our fireplaces. Into them we piled the moss in small quantities. If dry it flared so quickly into flame as to necessitate constant feeding, while if damp, it smoked as offensively as a burning rag, which meant dripping eyes, grimy faces, and pungently smoked tea and beans.

Along the western slope, immediately beyond the divide, there was much circuitous traveling over little lakes before we finally came to a second—the Hudson Bay—divide and reached a river of such surprising size that we knew in a moment we had passed, unknowing, a large stream entering somewhere on its northern shore the lake behind us. As it afterward proved the river we now entered was the Povungnituk. How much farther to northeastward it extends I had no means of ascertaining nor could subsequent investigation among the Eskimos along the Hudson Bay seaboard determine. The source lies probably in the mountainous coastal range of Hudson Strait, somewhere between Sugluk and Wakeham Bays.

The river, even larger than the Payne at its outlet from the lake, descends over rugged terraces and precipitous falls that involved much difficult portaging. But soon we came into more hospitable country, open and rolling to far distances. There were ripe berries in abundance and wild flowers and luxuriant growths of willow along the river banks. We were keen to look for any indication of our nearness to the sea. On one large expanse, whose horizon appeared to be landless, the crew cried, "Tiahoke," but Nawri, tasting the water, turned and said with a sour smile, "Tessiak tabutaa" (only a lake).

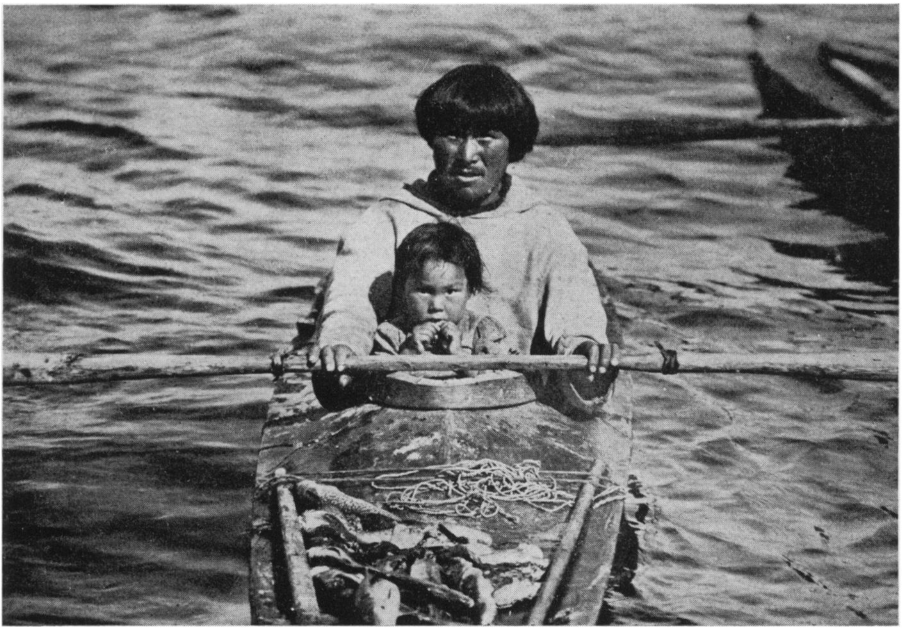


FIG. 12—Eskimo father and child returning from their fishing. Rock cod on the kayak.

The river's course became increasingly broken with lake expansions as we descended, all containing ice in some quantity but invariably open enough to afford us passageway. Their outlets were difficult to find, entailing much reconnoitering and circuitous shore-line travel. River reaches, tumbling sweeps of deep water, brilliantly transparent to a pebbly white bottom, we descended at racing speed, sometimes for three and four unbroken miles. A splendid canoeing stream, the Povungnituk, certainly the most picturesque I have ever traveled.

THE SEA

Finally, on August 1, we came to a point where the river tumbling through the channels of three large islands, in deep, swift, and easy running rapids, swept out into a long, narrow bay of low gravel shores, kelp-strewn along its tide mark. It was the sea, but Nawri tasted the water to make sure of it.

The Povungnituk, in point of volume, is the largest river discharging into the coast of Hudson Bay. Low estimated its discharge and gives its volume as ''nearly equal to that of the Ottawa River.''[10]

Hoisting sail we bowled along offshore and shortly sighted an encampment of sealskin topeks. Through my glass I noted a single figure scurrying from tent to tent, obviously appraising the occupants of the strangers' craft. As we drew within hearing distance, however, even the scurrying figure had disappeared; only a few dogs could be seen, prowling around the tent doors or sprawled in sleep on the ground. I turned inquiringly to Nawri. ''Innuet immaitame,'' he explained, ''that is the custom of the people''; and ''Innuet ho, ho,'' he cried, as we furled sail before the landing, whereupon the folds of the nearest topek door were thrown open and the occupants filed haltingly out, kapaying their astonishment. A few words from the men and we were all shaking hands. They were a kindly throng, on the alert to help us, fetching us freshly killed salmon, eggs, and berries and, with much interest, lending a hand at our camp making. On the following morning as we raised sail to our unfailing easterly wind and drew rapidly away on the last leg of our journey, up the coast to Wolstenholme, from the crest of a last vantage point, silhouetted against the sky, their arms pointed skyward, their knees flapping in and out in a stilted kind of movement like manikins on a string, they signaled to us in native fashion a final farewell.

---

[10] Work cited in footnote 3, pp. 12 and 27.